

THE PICTORIAL SUNDAY BOOK

WITH A HISTORY OF THE

SACRED LANDS OF THE BIBLE

BY THE

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PREFACE.

How good, how precious, is a book of this kind to the Family Household! A "Sunday Book" truly; yet not for Sunday alone, but for every day of the week. Let us shadow forth the materials of which it is composed, and the happy arrangement which has been adopted in setting them before the public.

The Pictorial Sunday Book opens with a history of the Bible, extending from Adam to Noah, and comprising the principal events recorded in the first nine chapters of the Book of Genesis. This history is continued throughout, a sufficient portion being given for every Sunday in the year, and written in a simple, narrative style, as easy to be remembered as it is to be read. Although the Scriptures, or Sacred Writings, were published in separate books, and at different periods, through a space of 1,500 years, they were subsequently, for the sake of convenience, collected in a volume. In determining their authenticity, each book or part was examined by itself, and its genuineness ascertained and presented to us in the form in which it now appears. The dividing of the Old Testament into chapters, as they are done in our translation, is attributed to Cardinal Hugo, who lived about the middle of the thirteenth century, and who performed it for the convenience of reference in a Latin concordance which he was preparing. That he might turn more readily to a particular sentence, he placed the first seven letters of the alphabet along the margin of each page. Rabbi Nathan, a Jew, for similar convenience of reference to his Hebrew concordance, in 1438, adopted the chapters of Hugo, and marked every fifth verse with a figure. In 1661, Athias, a Jew of Amsterdam, in his edition of the Hebrew Old Testament, divided the sections of Hugo into verses, as they now stand; and Robert Stephens, a French printer, had, in 1551, divided the New Testament into verses as we now have them in the various versions. This division into verses, however, though very convenient, does not, in all instances, govern the sense; nay, the division appears sometimes so improperly done, that it greatly injures, if it does not entirely destroy, the sense. Very frequently, too, a chapter breaks off in the middle of a narrative; and if the reader were to stop his perusal because that chapter is at an end, he would find that he had lost the connection. Now all this is entirely avoided in the Pictorial Sunday Book, in which the Bible History is written consecutively, one sentence following another in clear and regular succession, and thereby preventing the occurrence of any breaks, gaps, or hiatuses in the narrative. This is a great advantage, and makes it interesting reading.

Illustrative of these nine chapters, there are given several beautiful scenes, engraved on wood. The first is Adam discovering the dead body of Abel; followed by views of Mount Ararat; a Bedouin encampment; Arastus, a seaport town; Birs Nimrod (Babel); and Noah offering his sacrifices, from a painting by M. Poussin. Besides these, there are several illustrations of Natural History. Thus we have the Syrian sheep, and the Syrian dove; the thorn and the fig-leaf; the olive tree and the olive branch, with a representation of its fruit. We have, also, linear drawings of the manner of ploughing, sowing, and

carrying corn in the East. This profuse and minute style of pictorial representation has been adopted throughout the entire Biblical portions of the Work; and we will venture to say it is one of the most effective that has ever been invented for fixing the events of Scripture in the memory, whilst storing the mind with the most valuable kind of knowledge, and filling the heart with such thoughts and aspirations as, we are taught to believe, leadeth unto salvation.

The Life of our Saviour immediately follows the Bible History, and is also set forth in the narrative form. There is, in the scheme of the Saviour, a sublimity which we think can only be realised when we are under the influence of those tranquil emotions which are so apt to steal upon us in our hours of reflective solitude. It has been called *the Plan of Christ:* and in what does it consist? In nothing less than the universal regeneration and salvation of fallen man. This is the sublimity we conceive of it—the universal comprehensiveness of its all-embracing aim. In the conduct of Jesus, as it is represented by his biographers, there are unquestionable proofs that he extended his views far beyond the land in which he travailed. He uniformly acted as one who was concerned in a project much more vast than that of merely reforming the religion of his countrymen. He, not unfrequently, extended his regard to foreigners, assigning them a large place in his concern for their redemption. That he thought of the heathen—that their religious and moral condition deeply occupied his attention, is proved in several instances, by his mentioning them in his discourses; and although he is extremely circumspect in declining to form any intimate connection with Pagans, lest he should scandalise the Jews, whose intolerance was great, yet, when opportunity offers, he never objects to their listening to his instructions. Hence, partly, the reproach of his keeping company with *publicans* and *sinners*, who were not only persons of infamous character, but *heathens*, and more especially *Romans*. It is the more probable that there were many Pagans among the publicans, as they were the paid servants of the government. Nor is it inconsistent to suppose that Pagans of various classes were, form his fame, attracted to hear him; mingling with the crowds that surrounded him in the towns, and that followed him into the desert places. Those of Tyre and Sidon who came to hear, were, in all probability, heathens.

Illustrative of the very first page of the Life of Christ, in the PICTORIAL SUNDAY BOOK, there are several scenes engraved on wood. Among them is one of the Nativity, another of the Annunciation, and another of the Salutation of the Virgin; with the heads of Julius and Augustus Cæsar, Mark Antony, and figures of a Virgin and Child, copied from Cimabue; and other illustrations. Similar representations are continued, with equal profusion, throughout the biography of the Saviour, to the number of several thousands.

The Life of Christ is succeeded by selections from the Psalms of David. The design of this portion of the Work is, not to form a commentary on these beautiful effusions, but to examine their external history and character, without referring to the more abstruse meanings with which t' ey are sometimes invested. Much of the space allotted to them is, accordingly, occupied with considerations of them as a whole, rather than individually. They are regarded in connection with the Hebraic poetry and music; and the circumstances under which they were written are told. Their origin is examined; the explanation given of the singular titles which many of them bear; and all that research has been able to ascertain of those who composed them, has been superadded. After this, the contents of the Psalms are, in successive portions of the Work, carefully criticised, principally with the view of selecting from them such points as may yield information respecting Jewish antiquities, and the natural history of the Holy Land; or which may receive illustration from the history, the customs, the laws, and the manners of the nations of the East. This, it is conceived, forms a most interesting and instructive division of the PICTORIAL SUNDAY BOOK.

Thus, when so much that may be called practical has, in the PICTORIAL SUNDAY BOOK,

been given respecting the Psalms, we may here be permitted to add, that these relics of the Hebrew muse are not only simple in their structure, and exquisite in their language, but extremely striking, by the lofty imagery with which they are adorned. They may be regarded as the most beautiful creations of a fine fancy, inspired by the potency of undoubting belief, and the impassioned ardour of an Oriental nature. However they may be viewed, whether as lyrical or didactic, jubilant or elegiac, retrospective or prophetic odes, they are, in their own native character, eminently plain and practical; and although the poetical spirit in which they appear may sometimes be clouded with obscurity, they are, nevertheless, as clearly expressed as are many of the Biblical passages in which are embodied predictions by symbolism. The peculiarity of structure which characterises the Hebrew poetry is called parallelism; by which is meant, lines being nearly of the same length. The first clause generally expresses an emotion or a thought, leaving it to the second to dwell upon it, or re-utter it with some variation of words or emphasis. It sometimes happens, that when, in the first line, a sentiment is expressed, there may be both a revulsion and a contrast, when the second will present an antithesis to the first. At other times the idea is worked out by a series of utterances and images, in the style common to the prophets. In perusing the Psalms, it must be recollected that the genius of Oriental poetry is by no means circumscribed by such critical rules or laws as have been promulgated by the Horaces and the Popes. Inspired by the sublimity of the theme of which it sings, it sweeps away from all such trammels, carrying us on its wings to the cliffs of Lebanon, whence we may survey the glory of Carmel, the vegetation of Sharon, or the white skiffs on the sea of Tiberias. This is the spirit of the Hebrew poetry. It teaches us to contemplate the fields, the vineyards, the "pastures green," and the "quiet waters," that smile in and beautify "thy land, O Immanuel!" and then lifts us to gaze on yon unclouded sky, deepening in the far, far away ethereal distance, into a cerulean hue of the purest and intensest beauty.

For the Psalms, the same mode of profuse illustration has been adopted. Thus, for the first twelve, we have no fewer than fourteen engravings, suggested by the spirit of these beautiful lyrical compositions.

To render the reading of the PICTORIAL SUNDAY BOOK as varied as possible, Lives of the Prophets, the Patriarchs, and the Apostles, diversify its pages; and the fulness of these, and the lucid manner in which they are written, whilst greatly enhancing the value of the Work, prove a source of almost endless Sabbath enjoyment. They, like the other parts, are also profusely illustrated. Indeed, so abundantly is this the case, that if the reader were only to spend a few hours in looking over the cuts alone, without at all occupying himself with the reading, he would rise from the occupation amazed at the beautiful, curious, and instructive scenes with which he had been regaled, and at the extent of the valuable information he had acquired, in so brief a space of time, and with so little mental effort. But besides these numerous woodcut illustrations—all executed by the most skilful artists —there is a magnificent series of Engravings, reproduced on Steel from paintings of the great masters. Of these, it is sufficient to say that they are executed in the highest style of art. Among them are representations of "The Son of God," from the original of Titian; "St. John Preaching in the Wilderness;" "Christ disputing with the Doctors;" "The Last Supper;" and others of the greatest merit.

That no portion of Biblical knowledge, interesting and informing to the general reader, might seem to have been neglected or overlooked in the PICTORIAL SUNDAY BOOK, an ample description of the Geography of the Holy Land has been added to the other divisions of the Work; and to it has likewise been appended, a comprehensive Compendium of Scripture Geography. These will be found extremely instructive, being accompanied with large Coloured Maps, engraved with clearness and accuracy.

This portion of the Work must now necessarily possess an interest far beyond that

by which any similar work could, even recently, have been characterised, from the fresh information which is being literally poured upon us by those scholars who are devoting themselves to an investigation of the geography and topography of the Holy Land, by means of the assistance afforded them by the Palestine Exploration Fund. Mr. E. H. Palmer, M.A., of St. John's College, Cambridge, has returned from examining the "Desert of the Wanderings," and the country of Moab, in which he was materially aided by a grant from this Fund. As a mere example of the knowledge to be gained from his report (just issued) of his explorations in the "Wilderness of the Wanderings," we will quote a brief passage. "I have already," he says, "in previous communications, adverted to the curious remains at Erneis el Ebeirig, near Ain Hadherah, which, from their peculiar arrangement and extent, as well as from the strange legend attached to them, I believed to be the vestiges of an Israelitish camp. Our second visit, on this occasion, entirely confirmed this supposition; and the further discovery of what were, undoubtedly, tombs without the camp, seemed to point with still more certainty to the identification of this spot with Kibroth-Hattaavah, the scene of the dreadful pestilence described in Numbers xi. 31. The distance from Jabel Musa, on the one hand, and from Ain Hadherah on the other, exactly corresponds with the position of Kibroth-Hattaavah, relative to Mount Sinai and Hazeroth, as given in the Scriptural account; and the discovery is, therefore, not only important as the opinion set forth by the Sinai survey as the position of the Mountain of the Law, but as enabling us to trace the route by which the Israelites left the peninsula of Sinai for the scene in their forty years' wanderings."

Now, in No. III. of the Coloured Maps, illustrative of the topographical division of this Work, a light-brown line will be found, indicating the "wanderings" of the Israelites between Sinai and Kadesh-barnea, where the stations of Taberah, Kibroth-Hattaavah, Hazeroth, and one in the Wilderness of Paran, are marked. After leaving Kadesh-barnea, the Israelites are believed to have wandered for eight-and-thirty years in the deserts now called El-Tyh, during which time they encamped at Rimmon-parez, Libnah, Rissah, Kehelathah, Shapher, Haradah, Makheloth, Tahath, Tarah, Mitheah, Hashmonah, Moseroth, Bene-jaakan, Hor-hagid-gad, and Jotbathah, which is supposed to be Elath, (Numbers xxxiii.) Between Mount Hor and the Brook Zered were the stations of Zalmonah, Punon, Oboth, and Ije-abarim, or Iim. The exact positions of these are not yet determined; but it is one of the objects of the explorers, aided by the Palestine Exploration Fund, to discover them if possible. Information of this kind, so accurate and full, in connection with Holy Writ, will, as reading, be found to be not only interesting in itself, but a valuable addition to the treasury of goodness and knowledge contained in the PICTORIAL SUNDAY BOOK.

Here, then, the Publishers believe that they have, in the PICTORIAL SUNDAY BOOK, filled up a large hiatus, through which some idle trespassers might, on a Sunday, have been too ready to stray, seeking a different goal from that at which it ought to be the constant aim of all men to arrive. The name of the editor may be taken as a guarantee for the excellence of the matter supplied, and the purity of the sentiments with which the whole is characterised. As no carelessness has been suffered to appear in any department of the Work, so has no expense been spared to render it, as an effort of man, one of the most beautiful, the most morally chaste, and the most religiously pure, that has ever emanated from the press.

MEMOIR OF JOHN KITTO, D.D.

FEW lives have been more remarkable than that of the eminent man, of whose struggles with adversity—"pursuit of knowledge under difficulties"—and final triumph—the following sketch gives a brief, but we trust not unsatisfactory, record. Brief as it is, it cannot be read without advantage; for, as one of Dr. KITTO's biographers has observed—"We feel ourselves grow stronger, and we become more hopeful regarding what we can do and endure, when we follow the course of a man who, though laden with all our infirmities, it may be with greater, has, nevertheless, conquered circumstances; overcome what appeared insurmountable obstacles; and, by dint of strong-hearted toil and courage, has fought his way to usefulness and honour." Such a man was JOHN KITTO—whose example, like that, in another walk of life, of GEORGE STEPHENSON, may be held out as a beacon of hope to all industrious and enterprising men, who, as was their case, may enter into life obscure and unknown; but who, by imitating their industry, energy, perseverance, sobriety, and honesty, may leave behind them names for their children to revere, and for posterity to honour.

Towards the close of the last century, two brothers, named KITTO, were residing at Gwennap, in Cornwall. One, the elder, was an engineer; the younger, JOHN, the father of Dr. KITTO, followed the trade of a mason. A higher rate of wages attracted them from their native parish to Plymouth, and they happened to take lodgings in a street where a widow, named PICKEN, resided with her two daughters, ELIZABETH and MARY. In provincial towns, then as now, neighbours soon get to know each other. An acquaintance commenced between the KITTOS and the PICKEN family; and it ended in the two brothers marrying the two sisters—ELIZABETH, the eldest, becoming the wife of JOHN. At that time the prospects of both the brothers were favourable. The eldest had good employment, and also some repute as an engineer, as he "constructed the Upper Road, across the Laira Marshes, from Plymouth to Exeter, and embanked a great portion of it from the tide;"* whilst the youngest had improved his position, and, from being a journeyman, had commenced business as a master. When he married he was in his twentieth, his wife being in her eighteenth, year. Perhaps youth and inexperience contributed to the fall of JOHN KITTO; or he might be misled by the example of his elder brother. Both fell into habits of intemperance, and their prosperity vanished. The families were reduced from a state of comfort to one of great poverty. KITTO's father had to seek employment as a journeyman—whilst his uncle, in time, was so reduced, that he worked on the Hoe as a pauper. Well might KITTO remark, that "Drunkenness is the bane of our family; the name of KITTO is synonymous with drunkard."†

JOHN KITTO was born December 4, 1804; and, at the age of four years—before he could be influenced by what were then becoming the depraved habits of his father—he was taken under the charge of his maternal grandmother, Mrs. PICKEN, a most excellent woman; and to whom he became very much attached. He appears, for some time, to have had scarcely any other companion. They attended church, and walked in the green fields together; and his first ideas of religious truth and religious duty were imbibed from this venerable relative, who instilled into his mind a reverence alike for the word and the ministers of God. Frequently, too, she appears to have amused him with those nursery tales of fays and fairies, which have such influence on the mind of an imaginative child. She also taught him to sew; "and such was his assiduity, that he exulted in having done the greater portion of a 'gay patchwork' for her bed, besides having finished quilts and kettle-holders enough for two generations."‡ At the age of eight he was sent to school, and continued there for three years. As soon as he learned to read, he became eager to possess himself of books. His grandmother's collection was confined, he tells us, to "a Family Bible, with plenty of engravings; a Prayer-Book; BUNYAN's *Pilgrim;* and *Gulliver's Travels.*" "The two last," he writes, "he soon devoured;" and every penny that came into his possession was employed in purchasing the story-books which the septuagenarians and sexagenarians amongst us can recollect as forming the attractions of the windows in the shops of small booksellers, in country towns, in the early part of the century. He also borrowed books of every person he knew, who had any to lend; and those little works of his own, which were not "ornamented" with "wood engravings," he illustrated with rude drawings from his own ideas; colouring both his own productions and the "cuts" in his books—first with the indigo his grandmother used in washing; and then with some colours contained in a "fourpenny box," presented to him by a friend. At this early age he was very thoughtful. He preferred sitting with his grandmother, and hearing her tales, and reading, to play; and thus his studious habits were formed; though it is not improbable that this voluntary sedentary confinement was the cause of those violent headaches which affected him in childhood, and continued to visit him till his death.

He learnt to write almost contemporaneously with his instruction in reading; and he very early made indexes to his books; and showed a talent for composition. His first effort at authorship was made before he left school. His cousin was about to expend a penny for a story-book; and he wanted that

* *The Lost Senses;* by Dr. Kitto. † *Workhouse Journal.* ‡ *Life of John Kitto, D.D.;* by John Eadie, D.D., LL. D

sum to make up fourpence, the price of a *History of King Peppin,* which he wished to possess. He proposed to his cousin to write him a story for the penny, and this he accomplished quite to his relative's satisfaction. All that either could recollect of this literary effort, some years after, was, that it was "something about what was done in England when wild men lived in it."

During these years the child was happy; but that happiness was soon to be interrupted. His grandmother, whom he dearly loved, in 1814, lost the little property which afforded her the separate means of subsistence. She was obliged to go and live with her youngest daughter. JOHN returned to his father's, where his time was spent in nursing the children at home, to ease the household duties of his mother; or in assisting his father in his work as a mason. In 1815, he was placed as an apprentice with a barber, whom he records as "Old Wigmore"—one who "had practised on board a ship of war, and related adventures which rivalled Baron Munchausen." He did not remain long in this situation, and again returned to carry the hod for his father. During this time he occupied a closet at the top of the house. There he kept his books, and many curiosities he had collected; and there he appears to have spent the few leisure hours he had, always contented if he had but his books. But a severe misfortune awaited him. On the 13th of February, 1817, his father being engaged in repairing a house in Baker-street, Plymouth, JOHN, then in his thirteenth year, was, as usual, serving him as a "labourer." About half-past four in the afternoon, he was taking a hodful of slates up a ladder—his father being then engaged on the roof. He had nearly reached the top, when he fell from a height of thirty-five feet, into a court beneath. He was taken up insensible, and conveyed home, where he long lingered between life and death; and when he was able to recognise what was passing around him, he found he was deaf. So he remained to the end of his life; and it was no common deafness. "The action of the auditory nerve," says one of his biographers, "was completely paralysed. The sense was not simply dulled, it was extinguished. He became deaf, not comparatively, as if he could hear only a little, and that only with extreme pain and difficulty, but absolutely, for he could not hear at all." But, remarks another, "the mercy which 'tempers the wind to the shorn lamb,' mitigated, in the case of this poor boy, the first agony of the tidings of his affliction. His weak state rendered silence pleasant; and, before all hope of the restoration of his hearing was lost, the calamity had become familiar to him. The seeming calamity, we should say; for JOHN KITTO afterwards acquired the blessed knowledge, that all things worked together for his good."

When convalescent, he was not able to resume his former occupation, and his father left him to do as he pleased. His love of knowledge still remained; and to enable him to obtain a few pence with which to procure books, he accompanied the lads who used to wade in Sutton Pool, to collect the pieces of rope, yarn, iron, and other nautical fragments, which found their way there. Laming himself, for a time, by treading on a broken bottle, he next painted pictures—grotesque enough, no doubt, from his own account of them—which he essayed to sell in the streets, and after a time, he procured a "standing" in Plymouth fair, where he endeavoured to dispose of his artistic productions; and also of neatly-designed and executed window labels—which he proposed to substitute for the badly-written and worse-spelled specimens with which Plymouth then abounded. "Occasionally he succeeded, but as often he failed from bashfulness. The boy's infirmity sometimes secured him sympathy, and sometimes led to a testy rebuff; and his inability to talk about his articles made his customers, in one place, kind and generous, and in another, brief and surly in their dealings with him."* Thus he went on—every week sinking lower and lower in the scale of wretchedness—till he became "pinched with hunger, shivering in rags, and crawling about with exposed and bleeding feet." He had not been unobserved by some who pitied him, though they could do little else. They thought he would be better in the workhouse than in the streets; and representations to the authorities procured an order for his admission to what was called in Plymouth the "Hospital of the Poor's Portion." The boy himself loved liberty, and had to be allured into the house by stratagem. This took place on the 15th of November, 1819; and, "when he learned that he was in actual captivity, his sorrow was without bounds."

His residence in the workhouse—and an apprenticeship with a man named BOWDEN, a shoemaker, whose harshness and cruelty induced the magistrates to cancel his indentures—extended over nearly four years. During that time he learnt to make list shoes; and appears to have been very industrious. But this did not prevent him from pursuing his studies, and following up his previous attempts at composition. He kept what he calls "A Workhouse Journal," which has been published, and well deserves perusal; and his good conduct attracted the notice of Mr. ROBERTS, the governor, when he entered the house, and of Mr. BURNARD, who succeeded him. The latter lent him books—chiefly directing his attention to the Bible, and religious works; and, after a time, he proposed that he should write a course of lectures to deliver to the boys. "What!" he soliloquised, after this proposal was made to him, "I, JOHN KITTO, to write lectures to be read to the boys! Mr. BURNARD seems to think me competent to it, too!" His greatest trial while in the house was the loss of his grandmother. He narrates his feelings upon this occasion in his journal. "Gone for ever!" he wrote; "that is a word of agonising poignancy. Yet not for ever—a few short years at most, and I *may* hope to meet her again; there is my consolation."

Better days were in store for him. Being utterly unable to hear, he was not very desirous of speaking; and when he had to make a complaint against his master, BOWDEN, it was placed before the

* Dr. Eadie. † *Ibid.*

magistrates in writing. They were astonished at the admirable manner in which his statement was drawn up; and that feeling was not confined to the bench. Subsequently he was led to send some essays to the *Plymouth Weekly Journal*, which Mr. NETTLETON, the editor, inserted. They excited attention; and Mr. HARVEY, an eminent mathematician of the town, induced a few other gentlemen to join him in an effort to place a youth so highly gifted, in a position somewhat superior to that he then filled. "It has been suggested," they said, in a circular issued in their joint names, "that as a temporary measure, application should be made to the Committee of the Plymouth Public Library, to employ him as a sub-librarian; and that a sum might be raised, by small subscriptions, to enable him to obtain board and lodging in some decent family, until something permanently advantageous should be suggested." The appeal was successful; he was removed from the workhouse; placed with Mr. BURNARD, as a boarder, in his private house; and whilst his mornings and evenings were spent there, most of his days were devoted to the library, where he continued his pursuit of knowledge with unabated energy, perseverance, and success. At this time he commenced studying Latin; and also thought of "possessing himself of Greek"—of which he ultimately acquired a competent knowledge.

On the 17th of July, 1823, JOHN KITTO left the "Hospital of the Poor's Portion." He remained some months unemployed, except with his studies. Various schemes were formed for his benefit—Mr. HARVEY thinking of a university education; and his own inclination pointing to a missionary life. Before any conclusion was arrived at, Mr. GROVES, a dentist, residing at Exeter, having seen some letters which KITTO had sent to Mr. FLINDELL, editor of the *Western Luminary*, a paper published in that city—made inquiries concerning the author, which led to an offer to instruct him in the profession of a dentist; with a salary, in addition to his board and lodging, of £15 the first, and £20 the second year.* His offer was accepted, and KITTO removed to Exeter in 1824; where, in the spring of 1825, his first publication—*Essays and Letters*, by JOHN KITTO—appeared, being patronised by a list of above 400 subscribers. Soon after, Mr. GROVES determining to devote himself to missionary work, gave up his business at Exeter; and obtained for KITTO admission to the Church Missionary College at Islington—for the purpose of learning the art of printing, that he might "take part as a printer in the great missionary enterprise." Mr. GROVES undertook to pay £50 per annum towards his expenses; and the deaf *littérateur*, having been already a barber, bricklayer, shoemaker, and dentist, was now to add another profession to his list. He removed to Islington in July, 1825; and eagerly endeavoured to learn the occupation of a "compositor," under Mr. WATTS, who was then at the head of the printing-office of the Church Missionary Society. A little waywardness of temper led to his separation from the Missionary Institution in 1826; the committee thinking that he devoted more time to literature than was compatible with the discharge of his duties as a printer, and he not submitting, very meekly, to remonstrance. Reflection convinced him that he was wrong, and he renewed his engagement. During its continuance, he went out to Malta, as one of the society's printers, leaving England on the 20th of June, 1827. At Malta the same cause of complaint as was made against him in England arose, and he finally withdrew from the institution. When he arrived again in England, he found that most of the friends who had originally taken up his cause in Plymouth, received him coldly, thinking that his conduct was wrong. After-reflection induced KITTO himself to embrace this opinion, though he says there were mistakes also, he thinks, on the side of the committee. He had, at this time, another source of unhappiness. He left England for Malta, under an engagement of marriage to a lady of Islington, who was to have followed him abroad. She, however, proved faithless, and married another. The intelligence of this event, received at Malta, caused him to keep his room for two days; and when he arrived in England, in the spring of 1829, the sense of his desolation vividly returned. He never saw the lady again. She died shortly after his return, expressing her regret for the wrong she had done him.

Mr. GROVES had given up his business at Exeter in 1826, when Mr. KITTO went to Islington; but in 1829, when the latter returned from Malta, the former was still in England. He was, however, preparing for his missionary enterprise—not in connection with any society, but at the expense and risk of himself and a few friends. KITTO had for many years longed to engage in missionary enterprise. We find him writing in his *Workhouse Journal*, as far back as 1820, when detailing his views and wishes for the future—"I had even thought of plans to enable me to visit Asia, and the ground consecrated by the steps of the Saviour! Even now, notwithstanding my deafness, it would not be impracticable, if some kind gentleman, on his travels, would permit me to be his (though not expert) faithful servant." His wish was met in a way which he did not expect. Mr. GROVES asked him to join in his enterprise, and that, not as his servant, but as tutor to his sons. He consented; and on the 10th of June, 1829, the party left England for Bagdad *viâ* St. Petersburg; arriving at the former city on the 6th of December. On the route Mr. KITTO formed the friendship of Mr. (afterwards Sir JOHN) M'NEIL—which was a source of great comfort and utility to him. At Bagdad, Mr. KITTO and his friends encountered the horrors of an inundation, a pestilence (of which Mrs. GROVES died), and a siege; after which time passed more pleasantly; and during the years that he resided there, Mr. KITTO made marked progress, both in spiritual and temporal learning. He left Mr. GROVES and Bagdad on the 19th of September, 1832; and returned to England in company with Mr. NEWMAN, by Trebizond—visiting Hamadan, Teheran, Erzeroum, and other eastern cities; at Teheran again meeting Mr. M'NEIL; and everywhere adding to his store

* Dr. Eadie.

of information—especially directing his inquiries to Biblical antiquities. Soon after his arrival in this country, two of his early Plymouth friends, Mr. LAMPEN and Mr. WOOLCOMBE, were the means of introducing him to the Society for Diffusing Useful Knowledge; and, after a short interval, he became a contributor to the *Penny Magazine*, first, at the rate of £1 11*s*. 6*d*. per page; his contributions being limited, however, to two columns per week; but soon, he had more room allowed him; and his *honorarium* was raised to £18 per month. This engagement was followed by his marriage. In the voyage home, Mr. SHEPHERD, a fellow-passenger, died. This gentleman was to have been married, had he reached England, to a Miss FENWICK. It was necessary, in order to execute a commission from Mr. SHEPHERD, that Mr. KITTO should see this lady; and the interview led to an intimacy: ultimately they were married, on the 21st of September, 1833. They took up their residence in Islington; and the union proved a happy one in every sense.

Thus far the life of Mr. KITTO had been one of severe trial, sorrow, privations, and change. For a few years subsequently he enjoyed repose, happiness, and quiet constant home labour During this period of his life, he wrote—"When I sit down alone, or with my excellent wife, and retrace all that has passed over me, and all that has been done for me, since those early times, my heart is very full, and I do most feelingly pray God, that I may be enabled to walk, not unworthily, of the many mercies of my life, and of its many blessings and privileges." He lived twenty years after his marriage; but the history of that period is little more than a history of his works. His connection with the Useful Knowledge Society led to one with Mr. CHARLES KNIGHT, who entrusted to him certain portions of the *Penny Cyclopedia*. We learn, from a letter to his friend, Mr. HARVEY, that a large portion of his time was now spent in Mr. CHARLES KNIGHT'S room, at his establishment on Ludgate-hill; and what leisure he had, was employed in perfecting his knowledge of French and Italian, and in acquiring German. His engagements on the *Magazine* and *Cyclopedia* did not satisfy him; he longed for some medium through which he could place before the public the knowledge he had made it his business especially to acquire; and he found it at last in the *Pictorial Bible*. This work was commenced at the end of 1835, and was completed in May, 1838. It was not intended that Mr. KITTO should be its editor at first; but he ultimately became so; and how well he discharged his duties is best evinced by the popularity of the work.

The *Pictorial Bible* was followed by *Uncle Oliver's Travels in Persia*, not a very successful work; the *Pictorial History of Palestine and the Holy Land;* and *The Christian Traveller*, a periodical, of which only three numbers were published. About this time, 1841, the house of CHARLES KNIGHT and Co. fell into difficulties—a source of great trouble to Mr. KITTO, whose income had never enabled him, with his increasing family, to save much. After an interval he produced a school *History of Palestine*, for Messrs. BLACK, of Edinburgh; several small volumes for the Religious Tract Society; the *Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature*, for Messrs. BLACK; the *Pictorial Sunday Book;* and the *Lost Senses*, in two volumes, for CHARLES KNIGHT (who had resumed business, the latter being published in his *Weekly Volumes);* Descriptions of the plates in the *Gallery of Sacred Engravings*, for Messrs. FISHER; *The Journal of Sacred Literature*, of which he was the projector and editor for three years, when it passed into the hands of Dr. BURGESS; *Scripture Lands Described*, for Mr. BOHN; and *Daily Bible Illustrations*, in eight volumes, for WILLIAM OLIPHANT and SONS, of Edinburgh. These were all works which required deep thought and close application. His hours of employment were frequently from 4 and 5 A.M. till 9 and 10 at night; with intervals of domestic enjoyment certainly with his family (with whom his mother resided), but with none of those recreations which we think are necessary to prevent the health of the literary man from entirely succumbing. But though he lived retired, he was not unnoticed. In 1844 the university of Giessen conferred upon him the degree of Doctor in Divinity. The same year the Society of Antiquaries admitted him a member. In 1850 a pension of £100 per annum was conferred upon him, from the royal fund; and in 1853—when he was fast sinking under disease—£1,800 were subscribed for his aid, of which about £60[illegible] were expended before his death; and £1,200 have been invested for the benefit of his widow and two surviving children; the eldest and youngest dying before their father. That father, having completed his last work, left England, with his wife and family, in August, 1854, in search of that health which was never more to return to him. He fixed his abode at Cannstatt, in Würtemburg: there, on the 25th of November, Dr. KITTO expired; and there he is interred—a neat monument to his memory having been erected over his grave, by his friend, and the publisher of his last work, Mr. OLIPHANT.

Such is a brief record of the life of one of the most remarkable "Men of our Time." One who owed little to education; much to himself—aided and upheld by that Divine help, on which, from his earliest years, he appears implicitly to have relied. In the words of his biographer—"In whatever aspect we view him he is a wonder. It is a wonder that he rose in life at all; a wonder that he acquired so much; and that he wrote so much is yet a higher wonder." There is no one, however discouraging the circumstances in which he may be placed, to whom his example does not hold out strong encouragement, and an inducement not to despair; for, in his own words, his life evidently proves "that there is no one so low but that he may rise; no condition so cast down, as to be really hopeless; and no privation which need of itself, shut out any man from the paths of honourable exertion, or from the hope of usefulness in life."

INTRODUCTION.

"Remember that thou keep holy the sabbath day. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it."

It was in thorough accordance with a knowledge of our nature that, amid the thunders of Sinai, the Divine command for the observance of one day in seven was given to the people of Israel. The institution of the Sabbath—a day devoted to rest from toil, and to the exercise of religious duties—is of the greatest benefit, in both a religious and political view. On the first day of the week, or "The Lord's Day," the great events of the Christian system took place. On that day our Saviour arose from the dead. On that day he appeared to his Apostles, a week from his resurrection, when he held his conversation with Thomas. On that day occurred the feast of Pentecost, when the Spirit was poured out upon the Apostles, and the new dispensation may be said to have commenced. It was also strictly kept as a day of rest and devotional exercise by the early Christians; and the prosperity of individuals and of nations has, in all ages, followed its observance. When Sunday is given up to the pursuit of frivolous amusement; when man is unaccustomed to meet his God in prayer, to practise self-examination, and take counsel with his own soul; when he sacrifices, at the shrine of miscalled pleasure, the time which ought to be spent on his improvement as a moral and intellectual being—what is to be expected, but that the character of that man, or of that state in which this is common, will become debased, frivolous, or contemptible?

To the most casual observer it must be evident that the quiet and repose with which Sunday is observed in Britain has a powerful influence on the social condition of the country, especially in a religious and educational point of view. Contrasting the effect of this Sabbath-observance of the people of England with the round of amusement to which Sunday is devoted on the Continent, there can be no question in the mind of the social economist, but that the English system has a far higher educational tendency, and indicates and produces a greatly-superior intellectual and moral character in the people. Engaged in business for six days in the week, the working-man—(and who, in this country, is not a working-man?)—on the seventh is thrown back into his own mind, to observe and reflect upon his duties to his Maker, to society, and to himself. He is not a mere machine, whose existence is made up of six days of labour, and one of pleasure—without much of thought in the exercise of one condition more than the other, as the Continental man is; but he is a rational and responsible being—using the reason which God has given him, studying his own nature, and exercising reflection, judgment, and memory on what he knows, or has heard. Thus Sunday becomes a valuable pause in manual labour, which, if spent in mere amusement, is lost to religious and intellectual culture.

To produce a work adapted to Sunday Reading, which shall offer to the mind—and especially to the mind of the Young—the study of sacred subjects in an attractive form, and calculated to make the Word of God interesting to Youth,—is what the Publishers propose to themselves in the SUNDAY BOOK. Aware of the important aid which pictorial representation affords in the communication of instruction, and the power which it has of arresting and fixing the attention, they have prepared a series of Engravings, illustrative of the Bible History, the Prophecies, the Psalms, the Life of our Saviour, and the Acts of his Apostles; exhibiting the scenes of the great events recorded in Scripture, the Customs of the Jews, the Natural History of the Holy Land, and the Antiquities which throw a light upon the Sacred Writings. Thus, by the aid of the artist's pencil, we are made familiar with the scenery among which the Patriarchs lived—where Jacob tended his flock, and patiently served for years his deceitful father-in-law, Laban. Here, with our volume before us, we can behold Mount Sinai, from whence was promulgated the great code of the Decalogue to mankind—there we may gaze upon the gigantic architecture and monuments of the land of the Pharaohs and the Ptolemies, and observe the Children of Israel in their sad and painful Egyptian bondage; and while they sit by the streams of Babel, and hang their harps upon the willows, let us drop a tear over the misfortunes of that race, who remain on the earth as a living monument of the consequences entailed on man by sin and unbelief. We may follow the path of Moses as he leads his countrymen on their dreary pilgrimage through the desert, until we arrive at the encampment of the Israelites, in the plains of Moab, situate in the Arabian desert, after they had conquered Og, the King of Bashan. Let us here ascend the heights of Peor, and look down upon the magnificent spectacle, gilded by the beams of the setting sun, which presents itself to our view. There we see, stretching far into the horizon, the tents of the twelve tribes in the greatest regularity and completeness—with their banners and standards floating in the evening breeze—arranged in the order as directed by the Divine

command—"Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house." In the centre stands the sanctuary. Immediately around this holy place are the tents of the priestly families; and beyond, and surrounding these, lie the twelve tribes, forming a square. Well might Balaam, the Midianitish diviner, as he viewed this scene from the adjoining mountain, be struck with rapture at the grandeur of the sight; and instead of uttering the curse which he was sent to pronounce, exclaim, in the language of Scripture—"How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob; and thy tabernacles, O Israel; as the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river-side, as the trees of lign-aloes, which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar-trees beside the waters!"

And now, with the aid of our artist, let us look upon the last act of the leader of the Hebrews. Moses, having performed his mission, and led his followers to the borders of the land of Canaan—into which he was not to be permitted to enter—assembled the whole congregation of Israel, and addressed them for the last time; and having bestowed upon the tribes his solemn blessing, he received the Divine command to go up to Mount Nebo, and survey from thence the Promised Land, before he closed his eyes in death. Here, ascending from the Plains of Moab, he delivered up the charge he had received upon Mount Sinai. He died at the age of one hundred and twenty years, when "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated."

Having thus briefly indicated some of the scenes alluded to in the Old Testament Scriptures, let us take a hurried glance at a few of those referred to in the New Testament. Our Engravings bring vividly before us the scenes of our Saviour's birth; his early childhood; his divine teaching; his prayerful intercession for guilty man; his spirit's agony and bloody sweat; his sufferings, not for his own, but for our sins; his crucifixion and death; the Acts of his Apostles; and the more important events in the history of Christianity to the present time. Here we look upon the city of Jerusalem, its towers and domes, over which our Saviour prayed and wept, as he predicted the calamities which were to befall it, and its present state of degradation. "The days shall come upon thee that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, and they shall not leave thee one stone upon another, because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation." Beyond the Brook Kedron, which skirts the city, rises the Mount of Olives, where Jesus so oft communed with his disciples, and unfolded to them the benignant principles which he had come upon earth to preach. Between the city of Jerusalem and this eminence lies the "Valley of Jehoshaphat." Here, even to the present day, the Jews believe that the world will be finally judged; and here numbers of this dispersed people have for ages sought, and still devoutly seek, a place of burial near their beloved city. Deprived of a heritage and a home during life, in death they yet seek a place in the soil of their native land—

> "The wild bird hath its nest, the fox his cave.
> Mankind their country—Israel but the grave."

Ascending the Mount of Olives, every spot of which is holy ground, and looking down on its eastern side, we perceive the small hamlet of Bethany, embowered in trees. Here did Jesus retire after the toils of his teaching in the city, and pass his time with the two sisters and Lazarus, their brother—and here was the scene of one of the most stupendous of his miracles, when, breathing life into the inanimate corpse, he exclaimed—"Lazarus, come forth!" On the side of this hill, after partaking of the Last Supper with his disciples, had the Saviour retired to the peaceful Garden of Gethsemane; and here, by the gleam of torchlight, was he followed by the murderous band who, led on by the traitorous disciple, issued from the city, crossed the Kedron, and armed "with swords and with staves," proceeded to lay violent hands upon the Saviour of the World. And thus may we trace, throughout the work, every important event in the Life of our Saviour and the Acts of his Apostles, illustrated and rendered attractive by the pencil of the artist.

The Letterpress descriptions are divided into sections adapted to a Sunday's reading; and to each day is devoted a portion of Bible History, a Chapter on the Life of our Saviour, a Commentary on the Psalms of David, and a Biographical Sketch of the Lives of the Prophets and Patriarchs, and the Apostles of Jesus; the whole forming a course of Sunday reading and study, which, altogether avoiding the stormy regions of controversy, is calculated to instruct the mind and reform the heart. In addition to the subjects indicated, the SUNDAY BOOK will devote a portion of its space to the Physical Geography of the Holy Land. Great attention has been paid to this division of the work by the Editor; and there can be no doubt that, at the present time, when events of such importance are occurring in the East, the SCRIPTURE ATLAS, which this will form, must prove of great interest to the reader, and add materially to the usefulness of the work in the family circle. Indeed, the study of Geography is one of the most important and interesting which can engage the attention of man. It interests the mind, enlarges the understanding, and improves the heart of every reasoning being; and in it we at once recognise the Wisdom, the Power, and the Goodness of the Creator.

With these few introductory remarks, the Proprietors present this work to the Reader; and they trust that their efforts in the cause of Religion and Education may tend to the moral and intellectual advancement of the people of this country, and that the seed which they sow may be like that which fell into good ground, which grew and produced fruit abundantly, in some fifty, and in some an hundred-fold.

THE PICTORIAL SUNDAY BOOK.

BIBLE HISTORY.—ADAM TO NOAH.

GENESIS, Chaps. I.—IX.

THE Holy Scriptures commence by declaring God to be the Creator of the heavens and of the earth, and by describing the successive stages by which the globe on which we dwell became suitable for the abode and sustenance of animal and vegetable life.

At length, when the earth was arrayed in all its vegetable glories, and when the land, the air, and the sea were filled with living creatures, God made man also "in his own likeness," and "after his own image"—man, perfect in beauty and glorious in intellect, to inherit this rich possession, to bear rule over all its inferior creatures, and eventually to render all its elements subservient to his use.

The infancy of human life needed some care from the Divine Creator. The first man, to whom was given the name of Adam, was therefore not placed upon the cold mountains, nor amidst melancholy deserts, but in a garden watered by four perennial streams. By a garden is understood, in the East, a large plantation of fruit-bearing and pleasant trees, among which are interspersed the flowering shrubs and beds of flowers; and the whole watered by reservoirs and running streams. Such was "the garden of Eden" in which the first of men was placed. But it was on a larger scale, for it is evident that "the garden" embraced a considerable district, as did anciently, and still do, the "gardens" or "paradises" of Eastern kings. The site of this garden of Eden has been much disputed; but the weight of opinion seems to be in favour of its being placed in the country below and east of the ancient Babylonia, where the Euphrates, Tigris, and other rivers form the great stream which, under the name of Shat-ul-Arab, flows into the Persian Gulf.

In this garden Adam was placed, not merely to repose in the umbrageous shades, or to saunter beside the waters, but to lead a useful life—"to till it and to keep it." But man has small enjoyment in caring for that of which he is the sole possessor, and which he only can enjoy. The concise narrative in Genesis gives us little information respecting the feelings by which the new man was influenced; but from the result we may be sure that he longed for the intercourse of a congenial mind, of an equal being, and without this felt desolate even in Paradise. The gracious Creator, who had allowed his new creature to feel this want, probably that he might the more highly prize its gratification, then declared that "it was not good for man to be alone;" and gave to him the first of women, Eve, as a helpmate for him. We may conceive the joy, the fulness of heart, with which the first of men thenceforth walked hand in hand through Eden with the first of women.

Perfectly happy, alone in the earth, without the provocatives to or even the means of vice, what was there to give to the new pair a consciousness of moral responsibility and a sense of obedience to a bountiful Creator? This had not been overlooked. There was one tree of the garden, distinguished as "the tree of knowledge," whose fruit they were forbidden to touch under grievous penalties, although of all else that grew in that spacious garden they might partake freely. This was established as the test of obedience: and if the abounding evil which has grown up in the peopled world disposes the mind to think lightly of such a test, it will be well to recollect that, as Adam and Eve were then circumstanced, disobedience to some necessarily arbitrary restriction of this nature was the highest crime which it was in their power to commit. The crimes against men which human laws deem worthy of death they could not commit, seeing that they were alone in the world; and there could be no crime against God but through the infraction of some such positive injunction as this.

What might have been the lot of the first human pair, had they continued firm in their obedience, is impossible to say, and perhaps useless to speculate. They fell; and by that fall

"Brought death into the world, and all our woe."

Tempted by the glozing lies of the old Serpent, under whom Satan is supposed to have been represented, the woman took of the forbidden fruit, and prevailed upon her husband to share her sin. Hitherto they had been upright, knowing neither good nor evil, for good is only a relative quality, and only recognisable in the comparison with existing evil. But now their eyes were at once "opened to know both good and evil"—to know good lost, and evil won. The innocence which before had covered them as a robe, was gone, and "they saw that they were naked." Before this, in their innocence of soul, "they were naked and not ashamed;" but now the same fact became to them a matter of shame and confusion of face. Their first impulse was to seek wherewith to cover them; and they twisted fig-leaves together, "and made themselves aprons," for that purpose. The same impulse of conscious guilt led them to hide themselves among the trees, where "they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." That Voice they had never before heard without gladness; but now it was the voice of their Judge. After a mystical judgment on the beguiling serpent, and after pronouncing the pangs of childbirth as the doom of the woman, He turned to Adam and said, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also, and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." This sentence involved expulsion from Eden: and subjected the guilty pair to the physical conditions which brought death upon them, and upon all who sprang from them. Yet was not this sentence, extorted from the Divine justice, unaccompanied by mitigating intimations; and promises, not perhaps intended to be then clearly understood, were held out of some mighty deliverance from the penalties of sin through one born of woman.

Expelled from their happy Eden, the further career of the first human pair is only marked in the sacred volume by the children which were given to them, and by the troubles which befell them. They had two sons and two daughters. The eldest son, Cain, applied himself as he grew up to the culture of the ground; while the younger, Abel, was the keeper of a flock. Whether these employments were of their own choice, or were appointed them by their father, does not appear; but it clearly does appear that the first men born of woman were brought up by their parents in habits of active labour, and not of indolence and ease.

In process of time these two men made an offering to God, which fact points to some kind of training in religious observances, with the particulars of which we are unacquainted. These observances were probably not unlike those which afterwards prevailed among the Hebrew patriarchs, and of which we have a better knowledge. The offering of Cain was of the first-fruits of the ground which he had tilled, and that of Abel of the firstlings of his flock. The offering of Abel was received with some sensible token of the Divine favour and acceptance, which was withheld from the offering of Cain. The reason for this distinction does not very clearly appear in the narrative itself; but from the light of subsequent events and usages, it has been conceived that animal sacrifice had been already established as an offering for sin, while vegetable offerings merely expressed thanks for the produce of the ground. In this case Cain may be supposed to have stubbornly refused that acknowledgment of sin, needing atonement by blood, which Abel so readily offered; and in this case the ground of acceptance and rejection becomes very clear. From that time Cain cherished a most bitter feeling against the brother who had been distinguished by such signal tokens of the Divine preference; but we know not whether it was the sudden or predetermined result of this exasperation that, as they were together in the field, "Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him." Here was the fruit of the forbidden tree. The first human death was by murder, and the first man born in the world a murderer and fratricide.

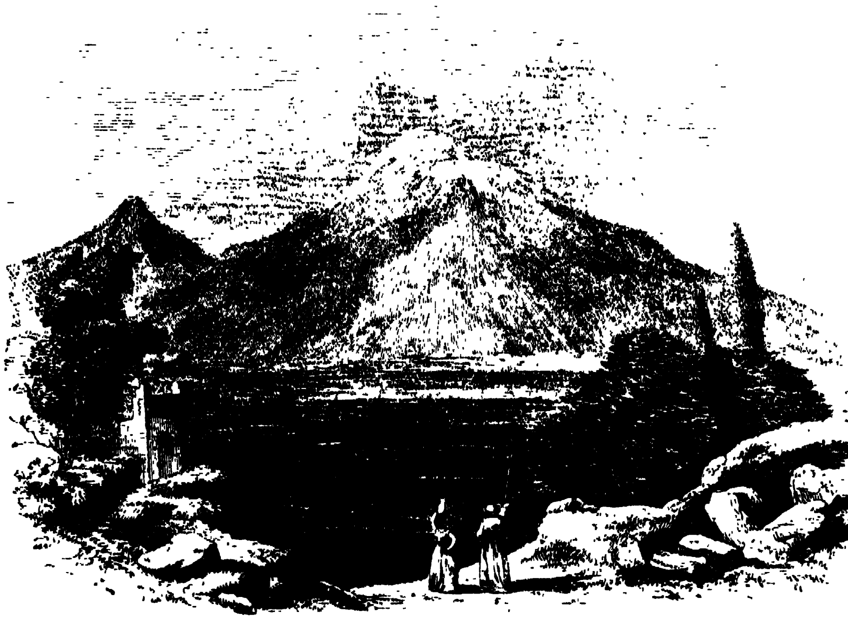
This first slaughter was too dreadful an offence for any but the



4.—Adam discovering the Dead Body of Abel. Adda yn darganfod Corph Marw Abel. (Andrea Sacchi.)—Gen. iv.



3.—Syrian Sheep. Dafad Syriaidd.—Gen. iii.



7.—Mount Ararat. Mynydd Ararat.—Gen. viii.



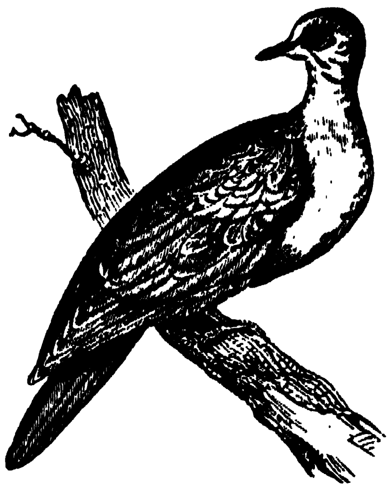
5.—Bedouin Encampment. Gwersyll Bedowin.—Gen. iv. 20.



2.—Thorn. Draenen.—Gen. iii.



1.—Fig Leaves. Dail Ffigysbren.—Gen. iii.



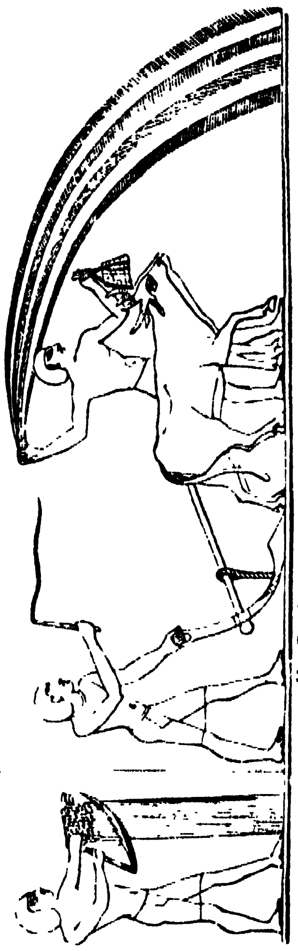
8.—Syrian Dove.—Gen. viii.
Colomen Syriaidd.



9.—Olive branch with Fruit.—Gen. viii.
1, a flower; 2, an oviary divided vertically; 3, a ripe fruit cut in half; 4, a stone divided longitudinally.
Cangen Olewydden â'i ffrwyth.
1, blodeuyn; 2, oddfyn wedi ei tanu yn umonsyth; 4, ffrwyth addfed wedi ei dori yn ei hanner; 4, careg ffrwyth wedi ei thanu ar ei hyd.



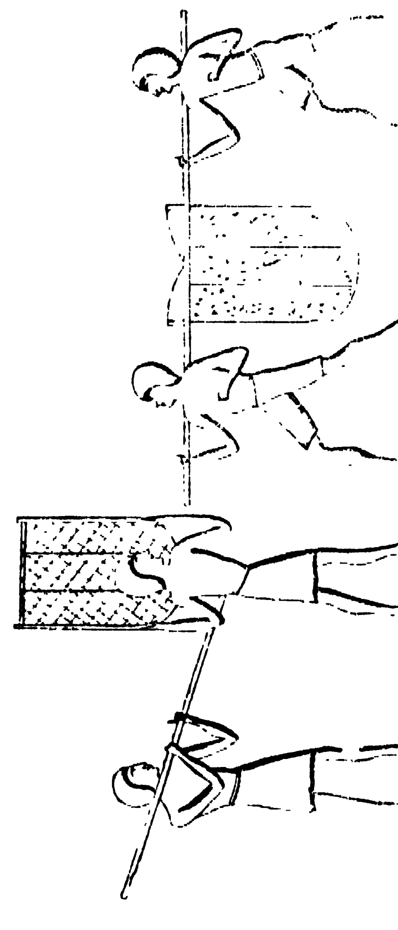
10.—Olive Tree.—Gen. viii.
Pren Olewydden.



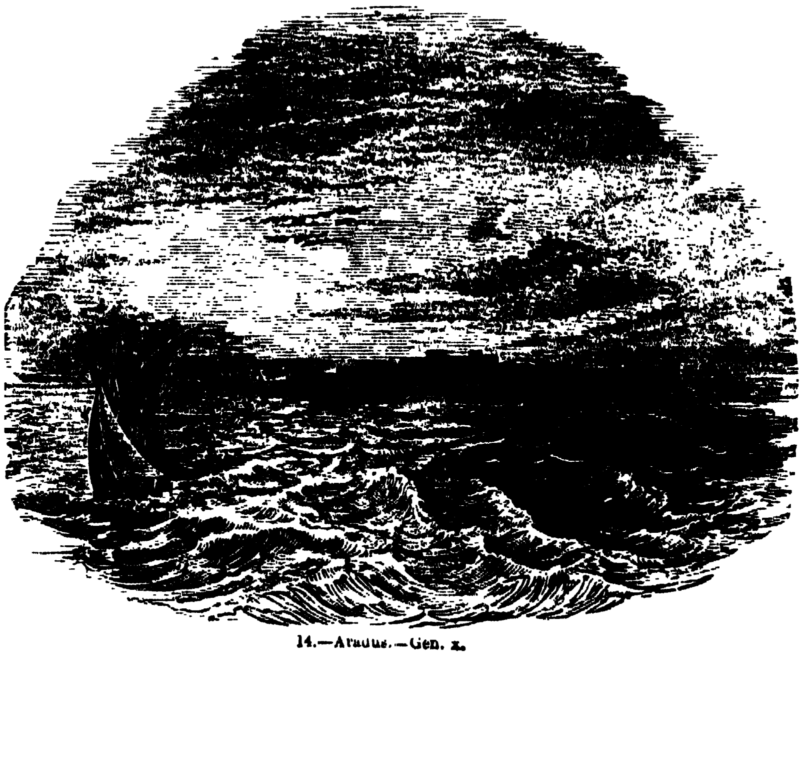
11.—The Ring-handle Plough, and Sowing.—Gen. viii.
Yr Aradr Ddorraidd, a Hau.



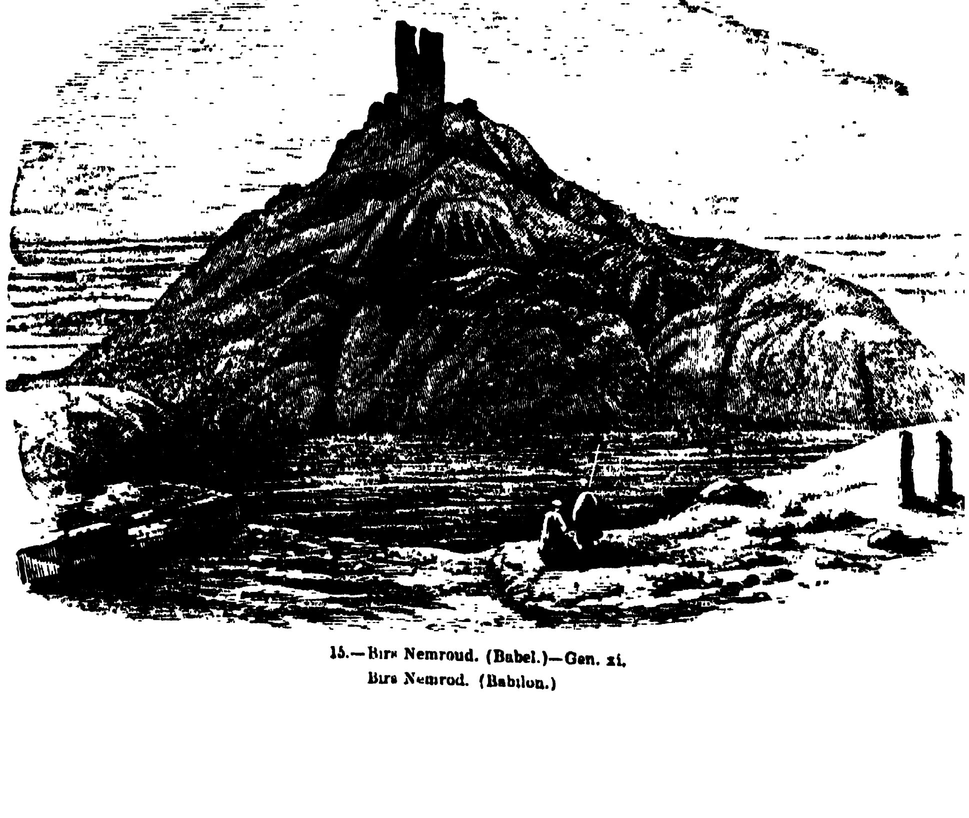
13.—Noah offering Sacrifices. (N. Poussin.)—Gen. viii.
Noah yn offrymu Aberthau.



12.—Carrying [illegible]—Gen. viii. 22.



14.—Aradus.—Gen. x.



15.—Birs Nemroud. (Babel.)—Gen. xi.
Birs Nemrod. (Babilon.)

Giver of Life to judge: and He judged it, not by taking another life, but by dooming the wretched and self-convicted criminal to wander forth in wild and infertile regions, afar from his kindred and parental home, with "the voice of his brother's blood" crying always in his ears.

Under this sentence Cain wandered forth and established himself in the land of Nod. There his family increased, and his descendants built cities, and became the inventors of many useful arts. One of them, called Jabal, was the first who took to that nomade life—living in tents, and rearing cattle—to which so many tribes of men in Asia are still devoted; another, named Jubal, was the inventor of the lyre and the Pandean pipe; another, named Tubal-cain, was the first who found out the use of iron and copper to man; another, named Lamech, seems to have been the first who devised the evil practice of polygamy, for of him it is told that he took *two* wives—Adah and Zillah.

Meanwhile other children were born to Adam and Eve, only one of whom, Seth, is particularly mentioned, because from him sprang the family which eventually survived the desolation of the habitable world.

The remaining history to the Deluge is occupied chiefly with lists of names and ages, which are of importance to us chiefly by showing the length of the interval between the Creation and the Deluge, and which on this ground is commonly estimated at one thousand six hundred and fifty-seven years. The names are not many, for before the Deluge the lives of men were of immense duration, varying from nearly eight hundred to nearly a thousand years. The shortest life recorded is that of Lamech, the father of Noah, who died at the age of seven hundred and seventy-seven years; the longest, that of Methusaleh, who live nine hundred and sixty-nine years. This longevity must have been highly favourable to the increase of population—deaths being so few, and births so many. It must have been also favourable to much progress in the arts of life—and perhaps a correct notion has scarcely yet been formed of the extent to which the ancient world was probably peopled, or of the progress which had been made in what are now called the arts of civilization. The Scriptural intimations are exceedingly concise, and only enable us to perceive that a most corrupt and criminal condition of society was soon engendered among all the races of men which sprang from Adam.

The race of Seth seems to have the longest retained its uprightness and fidelity to God; but it was gradually led to contract alliances with the race of Cain, which in the end confounded the one and the other in the same disorders by which the earth was filled with violence and wrong. From such intermarriages sprang men celebrated not more for their large stature than for the corruption of their manners. And in the end things came to such a pass, that the fair creation was made abominable in the eyes of its Divine Creator, and He made known to the still upright family of Noah his design to purge the face of the earth, by a Flood of waters, of all its tainted inhabitants. Noah was ordered to prepare a huge vessel, suited to float upon the surface of the waters, and spacious enough to contain not only the good man's own family, but couples of the different species of animals, destined eventually to replenish the desolated earth.

The ark was a long time in preparation, during which the guilty men were warned of destruction, and, urged by Noah to repentance, had ample time in which to turn from their evil ways. But they turned not; they repented not: and the terrible doom, so long denounced and so mercifully delayed, came down at last.

Many have been the speculations about the ark of Noah, and various the forms which have been assigned to it. It has been usual to suppose its hull similar to that of a ship. But the hull of a ship is expressly designed for *progress through* the waters; whereas for the ark it was only requisite that it should be upborne, at *rest*, upon the surface. It was therefore, in all probability, flat-bottomed, and shaped not unlike the houses which were at that time in use. We know that it was divided into different decks, or stories, divided doubtless into various stalls or cabins for the different bestial and human inmates, and for the storing of provisions; and the whole was covered by a sloping roof. It was built of Gopher wood, which is supposed to have been the same as the cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens.*) and it was well covered inside and out with pitch. Its dimensions were very vast, being three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high. The cubit was about eighteen inches; and hence these dimensions may be expressed as equal to four hundred and fifty feet long, seventy-five feet wide, and forty-five feet high.

At length, about one thousand six hundred and fifty-seven years from the Creation, the word was given to Noah, and he entered the ark, with his immediate family, consisting of his wife, his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and their wives—in all eight persons—who alone, of all the multitudes inhabiting the earth, were destined to outlive the coming desolation. The righteous family, in obedience to the Divine command, took with them on board the ark seven pairs of every clean beast, and one pair of every one that was not clean.

The stupendous event which now came on is related by the sacred historian in a few apparently simple phrases, but containing images of the most massive magnificence. "All the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened," &c. (Gen. vii. 11.) It rained forty days and nights, so violently and incessantly, that "the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth, and all the high hills which were under the whole heaven were covered." The waters rose indeed fifteen cubits above the tops of the highest mountains, and thus every living creature not capable of inhabiting the waters was overwhelmed and destroyed. The Flood continued for a considerable time after the inhabitants of the earth had perished: but at length the rain ceased, the waters gradually subsided, and on the seventeenth day of the seventh month from the commencement of the Deluge, the ark rested upon one of the summits of Mount Ararat.

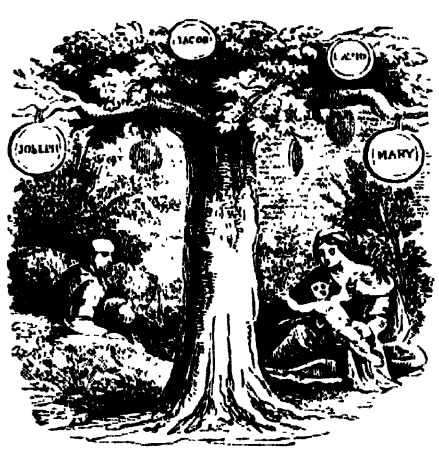
Biblical geographers are not perfectly agreed as to the region in which this mountain of Ararat should be sought; but the general current of opinion and tradition, together with the historical probabilities of the case, seem sufficiently to agree in identifying it with the mountain of Aradagh in Armenia, which travellers usually describe under the name of Ararat. Contrary to the common opinion, which supposes that the ark necessarily rested upon the highest of the mountains in its neighbourhood, we should be more inclined to suppose that it rested on the lower summit, or in the gorge between the upper and the lower. It will occur to any one who gazes upon that mountain, that had the ark rested on the highest summit, covered, as that summit is, with perpetual ice, and all but inaccessible to human foot, it would not have been possible for the various inmates of the ark to have descended in safety to the plain without some special miracle, of which the sacred text affords no trace, and which would be rendered unnecessary by placing the ark upon a lower level.

Forty days after the mountain tops had first become visible, Noah became anxious to ascertain the condition of the earth, and to that end let a raven fly forth from the ark. The raven went to and fro, away from the ark, and then returning again to rest upon its top, and at last remained away altogether. Seven days after Noah sent forth a dove—a bird whose tender attachment to its mate gave good assurance of its return. "The dove found no rest for the sole of her foot," either because the mountains were far off, or remote from the course she took, or, which is more likely, because doves in general fly low, and seek only the valleys and the plains. The dove returned, and the patriarch, who from this collected that the low lands were still covered with water, received her again into the ark. Seven more days passed, and he put the dove forth anew, and then her speedy return brought great gladness to the prisoners of the ark, for she bore in her mouth an olive leaf plucked off, by which it was plain that even from the low lands the waters had now abated.

In the six hundred and first year of Noah's life, and on the first day of the first month, the earth being completely dried, Noah began to dismantle the ark; and on the twenty-seventh day of the second month, he finally quitted it, together with all his family, after having been in it a year and two days. The animals were also sent forth, and allowed to disperse themselves over the earth, excepting such of the tame animals as the only surviving family of man chose to retain, as the foundation of future flocks and herds.

Thus ended that great catastrophe, which has left ineradicable traces upon the surface and in the bowels of the earth, and the memory of which has been preserved in the traditions of all mankind, in all their languages. As it seems very evident that the object of the Deluge was to extirpate evil, we must regard its resulting effects, whether physical or moral, as beneficial upon the whole, whatever estimate our untutored judgment might form of some of its more particular effects—such as the shortening of human life, which after the Deluge very rapidly declined to its present standard. It may be well to keep in view that the objects of the Deluge were avowedly "to be the termination of a state of human nature which had become incurably deteriorated in that form by the existing population; and to be also the commencement of a new generation and diffusion of human beings of a superior kind, and from a selected stock, that was the least vitiated by the demoralization of the rest." (Sharon Turner's 'Sacred History of the World,' ii. 307.)

THE LIFE OF OUR SAVIOUR.



THE time when the history of CHRIST commences was that period of civil quiet when the Romans had subjected nearly all the known world to their power; and their empire—the widest the world had ever seen — extended from the Tigris to the Atlantic, and from the Northern Ocean to Mount Atlas and the borders of Ethiopia. The various nations comprising this mighty empire had ceased their struggles for independence, and their contentions among themselves, and the whole lay in the stillness of exhausted strength under the iron yoke of imperial Rome. Most of these nations were under the direct rule of Governors sent from Rome; but a few were allowed the shadow of independence, inasmuch as the internal government was administered by native princes tributary to Rome.

Among these comparatively favoured nations was Judea, which was at this time governed by a king of its own, called Herod, and surnamed the Great. The family of Herod was of recent importance in the country, and had risen upon the downfall of the Asmonaean dynasty, founded by the illustrious Maccabees. Its prosperity began with Antipater, the father of Herod, who was of Idumaean (Edomitish) origin, and, under himself and his son, owed its growth to the patronage and favour of the successive masters of the Roman world, Julius, Anthony, Augustus; the last of whom seems to have entertained a personal liking for Herod, to whom he allowed as much power as was perhaps compatible with his position as a vassal of the empire.

The repose in which the world lay at this time was somewhat animated by a very general expectation of some great event—of the coming of some mysterious personage, who was to set right the wrong things of the world, and subdue all things to his power. The Jews claimed a peculiar property in him, knowing from their prophecies that the Messiah was to arise from among themselves, out of the house of David. But the expectation was not confined to them; for there were abroad the whisperings of mysterious oracles, which may be traced in the Ode of Virgil (*Pollio*), where we recognize them as reflected from the inspired strains of the Hebrew prophets.

And HE, for whom the earth was thus waiting, came—and men knew him not knew him not *then*, because he appeared not with the visible glories and conquering powers which all expected; but came in poverty and humbleness, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

But the Son of God was not to enter without a harbinger the world he came to redeem.

The turn of an old priest called Zacharias arrived to enter the sanctuary, and to offer incense there in behalf of the people, who remained in prayer outside. While employed in this sacred service, an angel appeared suddenly before him, and saluted him as the parent of the appointed harbinger, on whom the name of John and the abstinence of a Nazarite were even then imposed. The astonished priest, knowing that he and his wife Elizabeth had lived childless to old age, could not conceal his bewilderment and doubt, and murmured his wish for some sign from which he might gather confidence. To punish this incredulity, the required sign was made somewhat penal, and it was declared that he should be speechless for a season. Accordingly he went forth dumb to the wondering people, and he remained dumb until the things of which he had doubted were accomplished.

About six months after this, the same angel appeared in Nazareth, an obscure town of Galilee, to a virgin named Mary, and hailed her as the destined mother of the Saviour of the world. The pious virgin, however, startled at so strange a visitant and his momentous announcement, ventured to hint at a doubt naturally suggested by her unmarried condition; but she was assured that this immortal birth was not to be according to the ordinary course of nature, but would owe its origin to the "power of the Most High." Then, perhaps, that meek virgin remembered the ancient prophecy, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel"—God with us. (Isa. vii. 14.) She therefore bowed her head in pious submission, saying, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word, even as thou hast said." When we consider the misconception under which even the chosen disciples of Jesus laboured as to the real objects of his mission, it seems very possible that Mary did not at this time fully understand the greatness of her own destiny. She knew, however—she could not but understand,—that her promised son was to be the long foretold and earnestly desired Messiah, "the desire of all nations;" and that her lot was that which had been one of intense desire to the daughters of Israel in past and present generations. But the vastness of the idea which was presented to her, the magnificence of the event, awed her spirit, kept down the joyfulness that afterwards arose, and made that pious contentment which she declared, the most proper expression of her feelings.

It was a custom among the Jews for damsels to be betrothed, or legally pledged, to husbands for a long while, a year or much more before they were actually united. Now Mary, although not yet actually married, was in this condition, being under betrothment to a pious man of the same place, Joseph by name, and a carpenter by trade. Such betrothal was in the view of the Jewish law regarded as partaking so far of the nature of an actual marriage, that any unfaithfulness to the engagement was regarded and punished as adultery. When, therefore, this good man discovered that his betrothed was in the way of becoming a mother, his mind was filled with trouble both on her account and on his own. He was reluctant to make Mary a public example, and to bring upon her the harsh penalties of the law; but was more inclined to find some quiet way of dissolving the engagement between them, and of thus releasing her from the worst consequences of her supposed transgression. While these thoughts filled Joseph's mind, he was unexpectedly relieved by a visit from the angel, who made known to him the real circumstance, and encouraged him to complete his engagement with Mary, by taking her home as his wife, and thus afford her the protection which her state required. This was accordingly done, and it was thus that Jesus came to be considered the son of Joseph.

It happened that Elizabeth, the wife of Zacharias, was a cousin of Mary, and when Mary heard that her aged relative was likely to become at length a mother, she went to congratulate her upon an event which was always a matter of great gladness to Hebrew women, and which was of such peculiar importance to one who had for so many years borne the reproach of barrenness. When they met, circumstances arose which enabled the mother of the Harbinger to recognize in Mary the mother of one greater than he; and her ardent recognition of this fact kindled in turn the happy virgin, who broke forth in that beautiful chaunt, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour," &c., which is not the less—which is much the more, touching to us, from its being, in a great degree, composed from recollections of the Psalms, and of the song of Hannah, the mother of Samuel. We thus gather how well the mother of Jesus was versed in the Sacred Scripture; for her words are the outpouring of a mind thoroughly imbued with the ideas and phrases of the prophets and poets of the Old Testament.

The fact of this visit, and the relationship from which it arose, have suggested the probability that Christ and his Harbinger were known to each other in childhood; and hence it is that in pictures of the "Holy Family" the infant Baptist is usually introduced. There is probability in the conjecture; but we have no certain knowledge of it as a fact.

In due time Elizabeth gave birth to a son. The father still continued speechless; but on the eighth day, when the child was to be circumcised and named, some difficulty was felt about the name, which it was the usual province of the father to bestow. The neighbours were disposed to call him Zacharias, after his parent; on which the father took a tablet, and wrote, "His name is JOHN," being the name which had before been given by the angel. On this his dumbness passed away, and he broke forth into an exulting hymn, praising God that the long-expected time of the Messiah was come, and that his son was destined to be his prophet and Forerunner. That Zacharias so readily apprehended the position which his son was to take is explained by the fact that the Jews generally expected that the Messiah was to be preceded by a dignified Harbinger. This expectation was founded upon passages in the prophets (Isa. xl. 3; Mal. iv. 5), which also led to a prevalent notion that this Forerunner was to be no other than Elijah the Tishbite in person; although some were content to expect one equal to that great prophet in power, and endued with the same spirit (Luke i. 17).



6.—Gopher Wood. Coed Gopher.—Gen. vi.



21.—The Angel appearing to Joseph. (See Lesson of Sunday after Christmas Day.)
Ymddangosiad yr Angel i Joseph. (Gwel Llith y Sul gwedi'r Nadolig.)



18.—Augustus



19.—Medal of Augustus. Reverse.
Bathodyn Augustus. Y Cefn.



17.—Mark Antony.



23.—The Nativity. Yr Enedigaeth. (Rembrandt.)



16.—Julius Cæsar.



24.—Virgin and Child, from South Porch at Amiens.
Morwyn a Baban, o Gyntedd Gogleddol yn Amiens.



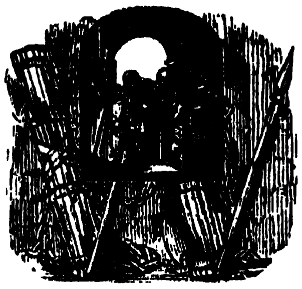
25.—Virgin and Infant Christ. (Cimabue.)
Y Forwyn a'r Baban Crist.



22.—Salutation of the Virgin. Cyfarchiad y Forwyn. (Andrea del Sarto.)



20.—The Annunciation. Y Cyfarchiad. (Overbeck.



27.—Psalm ii.



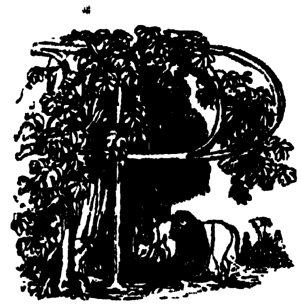
26.—Psalm i.



LESSED is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly.—1.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the water-side, that will bring forth his fruit in due time.—3.

Therefore the ungodly shall not be able to stand in the judgment.—5.



30.—Psalm v.



28.—Psalm iii.



36.—Psalm xi.



29.—Psalm iv.



32.—Psalm vii.



33.—Psalm viii.



38.—Psalm xiii.



35.—Psalm x.



34.—Psalm ix.



WILL give thanks unto thee, O Lord, with my whole heart. I will speak of all thy marvellous works.—1.

Psalm x.

For he lieth waiting secretly, even as a lion lurketh he in his den: that he may ravish the poor.—9.

He falleth down and humbleth himself.—10.



39.—Psalm xiv.



31.—Psalm vi.



37.—Psalm xii.

THE PSALMS.

IN that division of the present work which relates to the Psalms, it is not intended to furnish a commentary on them as spiritual compositions, or to expatiate on the sentiments which they disclose. It is more our object to examine their external history and character, than to explore the inner sense and deeper meanings. Much of our allotted space will therefore be occupied with considerations on the Psalms regarded in the mass, rather than with the particular poems. We shall regard them in their connection with the poetry and music of the Hebrews; we shall look into the circumstances under which they were written; state all that can be learned concerning their authors; and inquire into the origin and meaning of the singular titles which many of them bear. The contents of the Psalms will then be examined in the successive portions of the work, chiefly with the view of selecting from them such points as may afford information respecting the antiquities of the Jews and the natural history of Palestine, or which may receive illustration from the history, the customs, the laws, and manners of the East.

From this it will be seen that it is not our intention to read the Psalms *for* our friends; but to afford such helps as may enable them to read for themselves once more—many times more, we hope—with a new interest and delight, the most beautiful compositions in the world, which, in all the long ages since they were written, have day by day been giving a form and voice to thoughts and feelings which had else been void and dumb; and have furnished an unfailing well-spring of refreshment to the weary-minded, of hope to the desponding, and of comfort to the desolate.

THE PSALMS LYRICAL POEMS.—The fact that the Psalms are to be regarded as lyrical poems is indicated in the very title which they bear. The Greek word Ψαλμός *psalmos*, whence our "Psalm," signifies *the music of a stringed instrument, the music of a lyre*, and thence *a song sung to the music of the lyre*. The collection of poems got this Greek word for its title, because the Septuagint, or the ancient Greek translation from the Hebrew of the Old Testament, uses this word for a Hebrew word (*mizmor*), which has the signification of song accompanied with music, and which therefore equally points out the Psalms as lyrical compositions. The name PSALTER, which also, in imitation of the Greek, we give to the collection, properly denotes *a stringed instrument*, and is to be understood in the same manner as when we give to a collection of lyrical poems the title of Lyre. The Jews themselves give to the Psalms the name of *Tehillim*, meaning, *songs of praise*, which is not a very proper title, seeing that a very large proportion of the Psalms have not the character which it expresses.

The Psalms are lyrical in the strict and proper sense; for with the Hebrews, as in the ancient world generally, song and music were connected, and the titles of most of the Psalms manifestly point to their connection with music, although not in a manner very intelligible to us. Moreover, these compositions deserve the name of lyric on account of their character as works of taste. "The essence of lyric poetry (observes De Wette) is the immediate expression of feeling; and feeling is the sphere to which most of the Psalms belong. Pain, sorrow, fear, hope, joy, confidence, gratitude, submission to God, everything that moves and elevates the soul, is expressed in these hymns. Most of them are the warm outpourings of the excited, susceptible heart; the fresh offspring of inspiration and elevation of thought; while only a few seem like the colder productions of artificial imitation; and a few others are simply forms of prayer, Temple hymns, and collections of proverbs."

The Psalter contains the lyrical productions of different authors, belonging to different periods; for the title 'Psalms of David' is adopted only out of respect to the most distinguished portion of them. It is chiefly composed of religious and devotional hymns, as their place in the Sacred volume required; but we are not from this bound to conclude that all the lyric poetry of the Hebrews was of this character. That it had a wider and more diversified range is placed beyond doubt by the examples, few indeed, though precious, of another species of lyric poetry, which are preserved in other parts of the Sacred volume. Such are David's elegy over Jonathan, the Song at the Well (Num. xxi. 17), and even the Song of Solomon.

PSALMS I.—XIV.

WE now proceed to select from this group of Psalms some principal topic which admits of being considered in the point of view which has already been indicated.

LIONS.—These noble animals are mentioned about sixty times in Scripture, and several of these notices are in the Psalms. This frequency of allusion, united to the intimate acquaintance with the habits of the lion which these allusions evince, renders it manifest that the animal was in ancient times far from uncommon in Palestine. Indeed there are passages in which the presence of the lion in the country is distinctly mentioned, as in Samson's conflict with the lion in his journey to Timnath (Judg. xiv. 5), in David's defeat of the lion which sought to prey upon his flock (1 Sam. xvii. 34), in the slaughter of the disobedient prophet by the lion which spared the prophet's ass (1 Kings xiii. 24), and in the allusion of Jeremiah (xlix. 19) to the coming up of the lions from the brakes of the Jordan, when that river periodically overflowed its lower banks. There are certainly no lions in Palestine now; and this is, therefore, one of the many instances of the disappearance of wild animals in certain regions where they were once common. The complete extirpation of wolves from our own country affords another example. Lions are not now found nearer to Palestine than the rivers Euphrates and Tigris; for they prefer the banks of rivers, on account of the more abundant prey which they obtain from among the animals which resort to the streams for drink. It was thus that they infested the Jordan in the time of Jeremiah. On the rivers mentioned they live in dens, whence at night they prowl forth for prey, or dart forth suddenly upon such animals as unwarily draw near their hiding-place.

While at the mouth of his den or elsewhere watching for his prey, the position and manner of the lion is like that of a cat while watching the movements of a mouse. He eyes the approach of his victim with the most cautious attention, carefully avoiding the least noise, lest he should give warning of his presence and designs. This is the habit alluded to by the Psalmist, "He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den; He lieth in wait to catch the poor; . . . he croucheth and humbleth himself that the poor may fall by his strong ones" (Psalm x. 9, 10). Again, "Like a lion that is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young lion lurking in secret places" (Psalm xvii. 12) From his lurking-place the lion commonly leaps upon his victim at one spring, the extent and force of which are tremendous. There is a curious allusion to this in Deut. xxxiii. 22, "Dan is a lion's whelp, he shall leap from Bashan;" which if regarded as a prefigurement of the celebrated irruption of the tribe of Dan from the south to the north of Palestine (Judg. xviii.), finds a most suggestive and picturesque comparison in the reference to the lion's leap.

The great force with which the mighty beast strikes dead and rends its prey, supplies a figure in Psalm vii. 2—"Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces while there is none to deliver:" and many other of the Scriptural allusions to the lions are to the same effect (See Deut. xxxiii. 20; Isa. xxxviii. 13; Hos. v. 14).

In Psalm xvii. 12, the allusion to the greediness of the lion, "like a lion that is greedy of his prey," must be understood with reference to the indisposition of this powerful beast to allow any other carnivorous animal to feed in its presence or to share its prey. A very remarkable example of this occurred very recently in one of the menageries. A lion had been brought to permit two leopards to partake its cage, and they lived together on easy if not on friendly terms. The leopards were always withdrawn at the time of feeding, but it was at length resolved to try the dangerous experiment of feeding them together. The meat was thrown in, but no sooner did the leopards lay hold of their pieces than the lion rushed upon one of them and slew him on the spot; and the other would have shared the same fate but for the keeper's interference.

This is, without doubt, the habit which the Psalmist had in view; and the minute accuracy of observation evinced in all the Scriptural allusions to the habits and character of animals is the more remarkable by comparison with the fables and absurd or incorrect statements which disfigure all our ancient accounts.

SUNDAY II.—BIBLE HISTORY.

THE instant the second father of mankind set his foot upon the earth, he proceeded to erect an altar, and offer up burnt offerings to God, in token of fervent adoration and gratitude to the great Deliverer, who had so wonderfully preserved him and his alone, as the sole survivors on the desolate earth. This first impulse of the preserved family, God regarded with complacency, and he was pleased to renew to the appointed progenitors of a new race of men the blessing pronounced originally upon the first human pair: "Be ye fruitful and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth and multiply therein." Other matters were added for their benefit and encouragement. The original grant of dominion over the animal creation was renewed to them, but with some variations on the original appointment, and with so marked an emphasis in the permission to use beasts for food, "even as the green herb," that many have been led to suppose that there was no use of the flesh of animals before the Deluge. To obviate the apprehensions which must have been left in the mind of Noah by the terrible judgment which he had witnessed, God was further pleased to assure him that the world should never more be destroyed by "a flood of waters," and that "while the earth remained, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, should not cease." Six divisions of the natural year are here indicated; and it seems that the Jews ultimately adopted the same division of the seasons in reference to the labours of agriculture. They are still in use among the Arabs. The rainbow, which is the effect of known natural causes, was appointed by God as the appropriate seal and pledge of this covenant. It has been thought from this that the rainbow was a new object to Noah, in which case there could have been no rain before the Deluge, and the earth must then have been watered by streams and copious dews. In support of this view, Gen. ii. 6, "There went up a mist from the earth and watered the face of the ground," is quoted.

Noah proceeded to cultivate the ground in the plains to which he had descended. A vineyard was among the objects of his culture; and the impartial sacred record, which unhesitatingly makes known the crimes and errors of its greatest and best characters, proceeds to inform us that he became inebriated with the wine, and, as he slept the sleep of drunkenness, lay indecently exposed. In this state he became the object of mockery to his son Ham, but of filial duty to Shem and Japheth. This conduct brought upon Ham the dreaded and predictive paternal curse, and the equally predictive blessing upon Shem and Japheth. The curse and the blessing seem to have been accomplished in the lot of their respective descendants, for Ham is regarded as the progenitor of the African races, and Shem of the Asiatic, and Japheth of the European families of men.

Noah lived after the Flood three hundred and fifty years, in apparent happiness and peace, and in the enjoyment of every blessing; and he died at the age of nine hundred and fifty years, bewailed by his children and their numerous descendants.

How long the fathers of mankind remained together in the region where the ark rested, we are not informed. They were not likely to remove soon, or until compelled to do so by the pressure of an increased population, bound as they were together by the bonds of a known relationship, and by the ties of a common language. Eventually they arrived in the land of Shinar, where plains apparently boundless seemed to offer ample room for their increase without further wandering. This is the region watered by the Tigris and Euphrates, in which Babylon was afterwards situated. This region was then, as now, destitute of wood as well as of stone; but, deeming this a suitable home, they proceeded to make bricks, with which to build "a city and a tower." By a strong hyperbole, common in the East, they described this as a tower whose top should "reach unto heaven." This means simply a very high tower. The first of men were surely not idiots, and we have no right to suppose them capable of the exceedingly absurd intentions which have been ascribed to this erection. The plain Scriptural account is not only the best and most reasonable, but the only one on which we can rely. It amounts to this—that they feared being dispersed abroad, separated from each other, lost in their needful wanderings with their flocks in these vast plains. To prevent this, the tower was to be so high as to serve for a landmark and rallying-point to all their families. *We* know that the rotundity of the earth will, at a given distance, throw out of sight, below the visible horizon, not only the highest tower that man ever built, but the loftiest mountains. The first men after the Deluge, being, however, new to the phenomena which plains afford the best opportunities of observing, had probably been in the habit of ascribing to other and accidental causes such instances of the disappearance of visible objects as they had found occasion to notice. The design of remaining together was, however, contrary to the designs of God; and a special interposition of his Providence rendered all their plans abortive, and compelled them to disperse and people the different regions of the earth.

This was effected by causing such a diversity in their language that they were unable to understand one another, and were thus constrained to abandon their design, and to separate from each other in groups proportioned to the number of the dialects which were thus created among them.

The word BABEL means *confusion*, and it was from this "confusion of tongues" at the place that the unfinished tower came to be called the "tower of Babel," and the city of "Babylon." The historical importance of the city was, however, of much later date, when it became the seat of a mighty empire, and when, as it would seem, the remains of the primitive fabric were made to form the basis of a tower of extraordinary form and elevation, which was counted one of the wonders of the world, and the supposed shape of which must be familiar to the reader from the numerous figures which are abroad under the name of the "tower of Babel." These figures are framed from the descriptions left by ancient Greek travellers of the tower which existed in and after the time of Nebuchadnezzar.

On the now desolate site of the once mighty Babylon, there are two lofty and large mounds or hills of ruin, the one or the other of which have been supposed to offer the remains of this celebrated tower. One of them now bears the name of Birs Nimrod (tower of Nimrod), and the other of Mujelibe; and the former is that which is now usually identified with this ancient monument.

The Confusion of Tongues, and consequent dispersion from Babel, took place, according to the common chronology, in the year 2230 B.C., being one hundred and seventeen years after the Deluge.

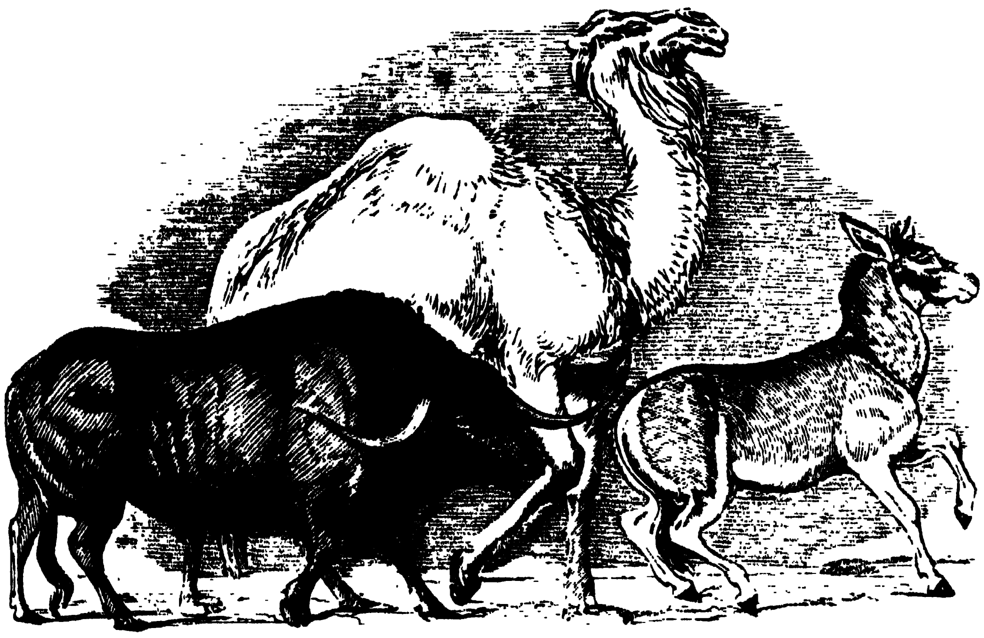
Among those who remained in this region was a person of active and enterprising habits, named Nimrod, who is described as "a mighty hunter." This person, doubtless by means of the bold and hardy men who took part in his huntings, was enabled to establish his dominion over several of the cities of this region, and thus to form what seems to have been the first of human kingdoms.

In process of time a very general corruption of manners, connected with and arising from a forgetfulness or neglect of the God of Noah, seems to have arisen not only in the land of Shinar, but in the other countries to which the families of men had migrated, and in which they had formed communities more or less organized.

At length, about three centuries after the Deluge, the Divine Creator, who had declared that he would no more destroy the earth for man's sake, saw it right to commence the wondrous train of operations whereby he designed to keep in the corrupting world a testimony for the truth, until the arrival of the fully ripened time for the appearance of the Redeemer—of Him who was to bring in a new order of things, and to crush iniquity beneath his feet. This was to be accomplished by making a single man—a family—a nation springing from him, the special objects of the Divine care and providence, and to commit to their keeping the great truths which the world at large refused to retain in its knowledge.

The person chosen for this was a man named ABRAM, dwelling in the district of "Ur of the Chaldees," and probably belonging to that kingdom—if it still subsisted—which Nimrod had established. In human estimation Abram would have seemed but ill suited for the high destinies in which a numerous posterity was essentially involved, for he and his wife Sarai were already old, and they had no children. It will be found interesting to trace the successive steps by which this renowned personage was prepared for and placed under the circumstances necessary to the great designs of which he was the object.

In the year 1936 B.C., when he was sixty years old, Abram received his first communication from heaven, and was summoned in general terms to quit his country, and proceed to a land that should be shown him. The prompt obedience of Abram showed that, whatever was at that time the religious condition of his country, he knew God, and was anxious to serve him; and it was in after ages remembered, to his honour, that he so readily abandoned, at this call, his own country, "and went forth, not knowing whither he went" (Heb. xi. 8). He appears not yet to have understood the full effect



41.—Syrian Ox, Camel, and Ass.—Gen. xii.
Ych Syriaidd, Camel, ac Asyn.



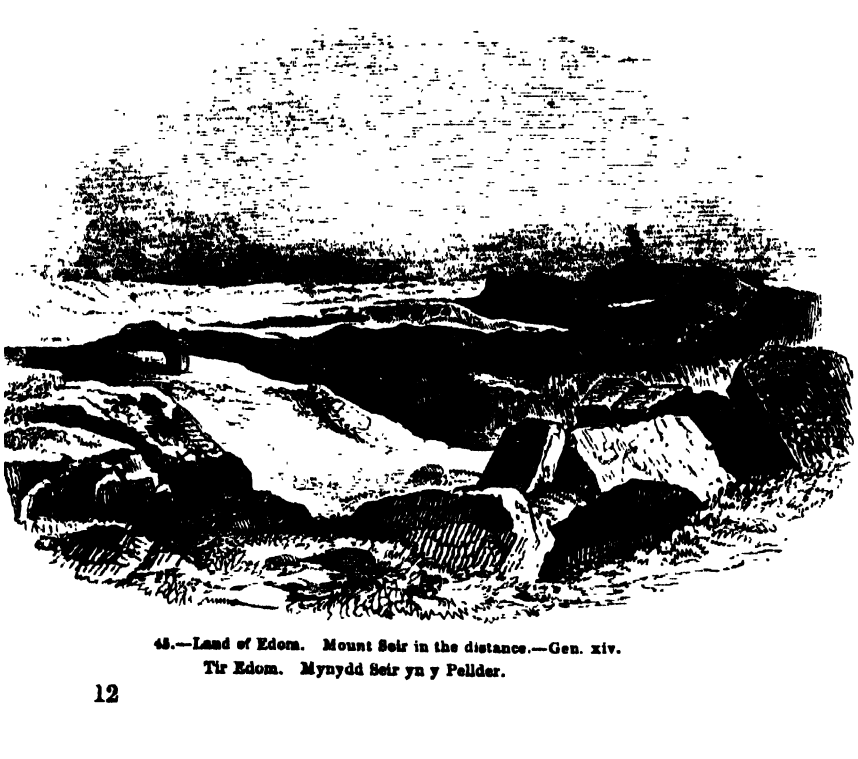
42.—Terebinth Tree.—Gen. xiii.
Pren Terebinth.



43.—Terebinth Tree.—Gen. xiii
Pren Terebinth.



44.—Plain of the Jordan.—Gen xiii.
Dyffryn yr Iorddonen



45.—Land of Edom. Mount Seir in the distance.—Gen. xiv.
Tir Edom. Mynydd Seir yn y Pellder.



46.—Urfah: supposed "Ur of the Chaldees.—Gen. xi.
Urffah: "Ur y Caldeaid," fel y tybir.



46 —Mountains of Seir.—Gen. xiv.
Mynyddoedd Seir



47.—Abraham and the Three Angels. (Alexander Veronese.)—Gen. xviii.
Abraham a'r Tri Angel.



49.—Hagar and Ishmael sent away. (Le Sueur.)—Gen. xx.
Agar ac Ismael yn cael eu gyru ymaith.



50.—Abraham offering Isaac.—Gen. xxii.
Abraham yn aberthu Isaac.



51 —Four-horned Ram.—Gen xxii.
Hwrdd Pedwar-corniog



48 —The Dead Sea.—Gen. xix. 25.
Y Mor Marw

of the Divine call, for he proceeded no farther than Haran in Mesopotamia, where he remained, being then seventy-five years old, till the death of his aged father Terah. Soon after this (1291 B.C.) Abram received his second and more pointed call, which is the first of those which in precise terms Moses has recorded (Gen. xii. 1), and this was accompanied by the splendid promise which forms the basis of the history of Abram and of the people descended from him: "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This last clause is understood to refer, as distinctly as then suited the Divine purpose, to the greatest of Abraham's descendants, CHRIST, in whom all the promises made to the fathers were accomplished.

This time the land to which he was to go was made known to him. It was the land of Canaan, which stands on the easternmost shore of the Mediterranean Sea, and is enclosed between that sea and the river Jordan. The previous life of Abram seems to have been that of a pastoral chief; and it was as a pastoral chief, with his servants, his flocks and herds, that the patriarch entered the land of Canaan. He was accompanied by his orphan nephew Lot, whom, in the want of children, he seems to have regarded as his heir.

When Abram entered the land of Canaan, it was occupied by several tribes, or small nations, descended from Canaan, the son of Ham. A town, with its surrounding district and villages, formed a little state, independent so far as regarded its own affairs, but with a tie of general connection with the other towns of the same origin. Each of these little states seems to have had its own head man, or "king," whose function appears to have been entirely administrative. He led the people in council and in war, but was incapable of deciding on any measure of importance without the advice of the elders and the consent of the people.

In this land there was much ground still left uncultivated, and therefore without owner, for in the East ownership can only be formed by cultivating the ground, or, if for pasturage, by the digging and keeping up of wells. This explains how it was that perfect strangers from beyond the Euphrates, like Abram and Lot, were able to pasture their flocks freely, without molestation from the natives, in the finest valleys of central and southern Palestine. Thus they removed from place to place as the season or the wants of their flocks required, God often cheering the patriarch by the renewal of his promises; and wherever God spoke to him, there Abram set up an altar, and offered sacrifices in honour of His name. In his first journeys, Abram traversed the plains of Shechem and of Moreh, and then moved towards Luz, the Bethel of Jacob.

Not long after this, a famine, occasioned probably by drought, arose in the land of Canaan, and constrained the patriarch to withdraw into Egypt, which usually enjoys abundance from its overflowing river, even when other countries are consumed through want of rain. On entering Egypt, the patriarch was beset by an unseemly misgiving lest the beauty of his wife Sarai should attract the notice of the dusky Egyptians, and bring down ruin upon himself and her. He therefore gave out that she was his sister. But this brought about the very evil that he dreaded. His alleged sister was taken from him to the royal harem, and a special interposition of providence was required for her deliverance. The real case thus became known to the Egyptian King, who then restored her to her husband, whom he loaded with valuable gifts, so that when, soon after, Abram withdrew from Egypt, he was very rich in "sheep, and oxen, and he-asses, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and she-asses, and camels." "Silver and gold" he also possessed in abundance.

Abram then returned to the place where he had built an altar to the Lord, between Bethel and Hai. Here it was soon found that the pasturages were unable to support the united flocks of Abram and Lot; and violent contentions soon arose between their respective herdsmen, to whom the choice of places for tents, or the right to springs of water, shade, or a spot of thick and salubrious herbage, afforded matter of continual strife. Abram saw that separation was the only remedy for this evil, and he proposed that remedy to his nephew, to whom he generously left the choice of pasture-grounds. Lot did not hesitate to accept this advantage, and made choice of the well-watered and garden-like plains of the Jordan, to which he immediately removed.

Having parted from his nephew, Abram removed his camp to the rich and pleasant valley of Mamre, near Hebron, where there were many terebinth-trees, under one of the noblest of which the patriarch's own tent was set. He here entered into friendly relations with the Amorites, who also inhabited this valley; and when news came to him there that Lot, with all his family and possessions, had been carried away by a marauding troop from the East, which had ravaged all the region in which he dwelt, three of the Amoritish chiefs readily joined him with their people in the pursuit to rescue the captives. With this aid Abram, followed by three hundred and eighteen of his own armed servants, pursued the retreating invaders, and overtook them in the neighbourhood of Damascus. Their camp being surprised in the dead of the night, they fled in all haste, leaving in the hands of Abram their captives and their spoil. The patriarch had thus the satisfaction not only of rescuing Lot, but of rendering an important service to the people among whom he sojourned. This victory filled all the country with his renown: his return was a triumph, and kings went forth from their cities to salute him on his way. One of these interviews, indeed the only one recorded, is remarkable. It was that with Melchizedek, the king of Salem, who seems to have been a worshipper of the true God, whom he calls "The Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth." To him he was also priest; for in those days the king or chief was priest also of his people. He brought forth refreshment for the weary victors, and Abram bestowed upon him a tenth part of the spoil. The kings of the ravaged plain also came from some distance to thank him; and, refusing to use the undoubted right which the custom of war gave to him, the patriarch restored not only the recaptured people, but all the recovered spoil. Abram's answer to the proposition of the king of Sodom, that he should retain the spoil and restore only the people, is characteristic: "I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet [sandal-thong], lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich."

Abram returned to Mamre, and Lot to the plain of Sodom.

Still there was trouble in the heart of the patriarch. He was still childless, he was still without a son to inherit all the wealth which God had given to him, and all the greatness to which he had grown. This would be grievous in any case; but in those days, and under that condition in life, the desire of children was a consuming passion. Hence the need of those frequent encouragements which he received from God, who at length condescended to enter into a solemn covenant to assure to him through his posterity the inheritance of the land in which he wandered. This seems to have satisfied the patriarch; but Sarai, his wife, had less faith, and she proposed to her husband a resource which was not seldom resorted to in those times. She proposed to give him her handmaid Hagar, as a secondary wife, with the view that any children which came from this union might, by what we should call "a legal fiction," be counted hers. This was done; and in due time Hagar gave birth to a son, who received the name of Ishmael, and whom both Abram and Sarai were willing to regard as the promised heir.

Having long rested in this conclusion, the patriarch was twelve years after not a little startled to learn that Sarai herself was the destined mother of the promised son, and that the time for the fulfilment of the promises made to him was near at hand. On this occasion all these promises were solemnly renewed, the rite of circumcision was established as a sign of the covenant between him and God; and according to an Eastern custom of imposing or taking new names with regard to altered circumstances, the name of ABRAM (*exalted father*) was now changed to ABRAHAM (*father of a multitude*), and that of SARAI (*quarrelsome*) to SARAH (*princess*).

Now the inhabitants of the plain of Sodom were "sinners before the Lord exceedingly." Their abominations were such as seemed to require that they should be swept from the earth by some terrible sudden stroke, to evince that a just and holy God still governed the world. The avenging angels were at length sent down; and as Abraham sat in his tent door in the heat of the day, he beheld them advancing in the likeness of wayfaring men, and persuaded them to accept the hospitalities of his tent. As they departed the most august of these personages tarried awhile, and revealed to Abraham the doom of the cities of the plain. The patriarch interceded, with respectful importunity, on their behalf, lest the righteous should perish with the wicked; and he at length obtained the promise that if but ten righteous men were found in Sodom, the threatened ruin should not come down. But the ten righteous men were not found; and when Abraham arose early in the morning and looked towards the fertile vale in which the cities had lain, he saw that the whole had been destroyed by fire from heaven, and the smoke of their burning still arose "like the smoke of a furnace;" and the vale, once "like the garden of the Lord," has since, under the name of the Dead Sea, remained an abiding wonder to all who have passed that way. But Lot had not perished. The commissioned angels had urged him forth, with his wife and his two daughters; and they all escaped, save the wife, who, lingering behind, was overtaken by the destroying element, and remained, covered with a saline incrustation, like "a pillar of salt," upon the borders of the plain. The bereaved Lot withdrew to one of the caves which abound in that region.



SUNDAY II.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

THE Roman emperor, not long after this, issued a decree for a general registration or census to be taken; and, according to the policy observed on such occasions, the decree required every one to be registered in his paternal city. This obliged Joseph and Mary to travel to Bethlehem, to which, being of the house and lineage of David, they belonged. The condition of Mary, thus far gone with child, probably occasioned that lateness of arrival which obliged them to take up their lodging in the stables which run behind the Eastern inns or caravanseries, the lodging-room being already occupied.

Here, among the beasts of the stall, was born the SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD; and here, when he had been wrapped in swaddling-clothes, a manger was made to serve for his cradle.

This was the greatest event the world had ever seen—for it was the coming of its Redeemer. It was an event which shook Hell, and caused rejoicings through all the saints of heaven, but it occurred, and might have passed as a common occurrence on the earth—the birth of a son to a humble pair—had not the angels of God taken notice of it. There were abroad that night in the common around Bethlehem shepherds keeping their flocks; for in the Eastern countries, where there are no enclosures, flocks must needs be watched by shepherds night and day. They were aroused from their half-slumbering watch by a sudden radiance which shone around them from the presence of an angel, whose appearance filled them with dread. But they were re-assured by the glad and cheerful voice with which he announced the glad tidings of great joy. "Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour—who is Christ, the Lord." There was not a man, woman, or child in Israel who was not familiar with the general expectation of such a personage. The shepherds there had not the slightest difficulty in understanding this joyous intimation. And where were they to seek this greatest of woman born? They were told to seek him, not in regal palaces or priestly courts, nor lapped in splendour in the mansions of the great, but—"Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, and lying in a manger." And immediately there gathered around the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, who broke forth in praise to God for his love to man, and proclaiming in exulting chants—"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men."

The shepherds thought no more of their flocks, but hastened away to Bethlehem, and having found the infant lying in a manger, as the angel had described, they made known all that they had seen and heard. Many wondered, but most, even those who wondered, let the matter pass from their minds, till some thirty or forty years after, when the history of "the prophet of Nazareth" became a matter of general talk, and then probably some old people called to mind the circumstances which attended the birth of the holy child at Bethlehem. Mary, now a blessed mother, wondered also; but SHE forgot nothing—"SHE pondered these things in her heart" (Luke ii. 1—20).

On the eighth day from the birth, the child was circumcised; and, according to the custom of giving a name at the time of circumcision, he then received the name of JESUS, which had been given to him by the angel who first announced his birth. JESUS is the Greek form (the New Testament being written in Greek) of the Hebrew name Joshua, which was not uncommon among the Hebrews. It means *a Saviour;* and was therefore the most proper name in actual use which could have been chosen for the Messiah.

The law required that every Hebrew woman should be separated from the congregation for forty days after the birth of a male, and for eighty days after the birth of a female child. At the expiration of that time the mother was to repair to the Temple, to make the offerings for her purification. This offering was a lamb for those who could afford it; but those who were not able to bring a lamb might offer a pair of turtle-doves or of young pigeons (Lev. xii. 2, 6, 8; Luke ii. 22—24). The mother of Jesus gave the humbler offering, and as she probably would not have done this if a lamb could have been afforded, we have thus an incidental but touching evidence of the humble circumstances under which He—who was greater than all potentates—was born and reared.

This also shows that the visit of the Magi took place after and not before the purification, for their rich gifts would have furnished means for the more costly offering.

The Jewish traditions allege that mothers appeared at the Temple on this occasion in white raiment. It is to this Milton alludes—

> "Mine, as whom washed from spot of child-bed taint
> Purification in the old law did save,
> Came vested all in white, pure as her mind."

At the same time the child was to be presented before the Lord, and if it were a first-born son he was to be redeemed from the obligations of sacerdotal services by the payment of five shekels of silver (Exod. xiii. 2, 11—14; Luke ii. 23). The presentation of Jesus was distinguished by a very remarkable circumstance. There was an aged man at Jerusalem of the name of Simeon, whom some identify with a venerable Rabbi of that name who is described by the Talmudical writers as the father of that Gamaliel under which St. Paul completed his Jewish education at Jerusalem. Whether so or not, this aged Simeon was one of those who lived in earnest expectation of the manifestation of the long-promised Messiah, and it had been revealed to him that his aged eyes should behold the Lord's Christ before they closed in death. He entered the Temple at the moment of the presentation, and recognising in the holy child the fulfilment of his hopes, he took him in his arms, and we may conceive that tears of joy bedewed his venerable face as he blessed God that the long-hoped-for day had dawned at last. A very aged and devout woman, called Anna, who was a constant frequenter of the Temple, was also present, and shared in the recognition and the joy.

From Jerusalem the holy family did not proceed home to Nazareth, but returned to Bethlehem. This is not said, but it is implied in the connection of the narrative (Luke ii. 39; Matt. ii. 1). Various reasons have been assigned for this step; but the most probable one seems to be that, as Jerusalem was only six miles from Bethlehem, they proceeded to the Temple on the day appointed by the law, and then returned to tarry a little longer with their friends, or to wind up their affairs before they proceeded to their distant home. It is, however, not unlikely that Mary, who, as we have seen, was familiar with the Scriptures relating to the Messiah, may have preferred Bethlehem on account of Micah v. 2, and from the fame of the angelic vision which the shepherds witnessed.

Some time after the holy family had returned to Bethlehem, a strong sensation was produced at Jerusalem by the arrival of certain Eastern sages inquiring publicly for him who was born King of the Jews, and declaring that, while in the far East, they had seen his star and had come to offer him their homage.

The inquiries of these distinguished foreigners reached the ears of Herod, and excited in him much jealousy and alarm. He was led at once to conclude that the expected Messiah was at length come; and as he partook of the general delusion respecting the nature of that kingdom which Christ would establish, he saw nothing in this but ruin and overthrow to the dynasty which he had taken so much trouble to establish. Nevertheless, although thus beholding in this event the accomplishment of ancient prophecies, and of the desire on which the heart of the nation was fixed, he arrived at the horrid resolution of destroying in time so dangerous a claimant of sovereignty. To this end he assembled the ecclesiastical authorities, and inquired of them the place which prophecy indicated as the birth-place of Christ. Citing Micah v. 2 as their authority, they with one voice declared that Bethlehem was the appointed place; and accordingly the crafty and unscrupulous tyrant directed the Magi to seek him of whom they inquired in that city; and he desired that, when they had found him, they would return and impart the result to him, that he also might go and tender his homage.

The Magi then repaired to Bethlehem, and, being guided by the star, which re-appeared before them, they soon discovered the infant Jesus. The unexpectedly humble circumstances by which they found him surrounded made no change in their purpose: "they fell down and worshipped him," and then, according to the custom of the East for all persons admitted to an audience to offer gifts of more or less value, the strangers "opened their treasures, and presented to him gold, frankincense, and myrrh," and these gifts are supposed by many to have been typical of their allegiance and their hopes. They then returned home, without passing through Jerusalem as Herod had required, according to a warning which they had received in a dream. Another warning, similarly conveyed to Joseph, occasioned the holy family to withdraw into Egypt, which was then, and had long been, the general refuge for all who were oppressed, or discontented, or apprehended danger in Israel.



54.—The Nativity. (Carlo Maratti.)
Yr Enedigaeth.



56.—The Wise Men's Offering (Rubens.)
Offrwm y Doethion.



52.—Nazareth



58.—The Infant St. John. (Murillo.)
Y Baban St. Ioan.



53.—Bethlehem



57.—Flight into Egypt. (Guido.)
Y Ffoad i'r Aipht.



55.—The Presentation in the Temple. (F. Bartolomeo di S. Marco.)
Y Cyflwyniad yn y Deml.



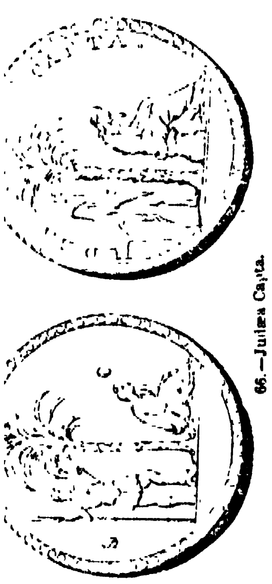
62.—The Valonidi Oak.
Derw Valonidi.



63.—Vineyard.
Gwinllan.



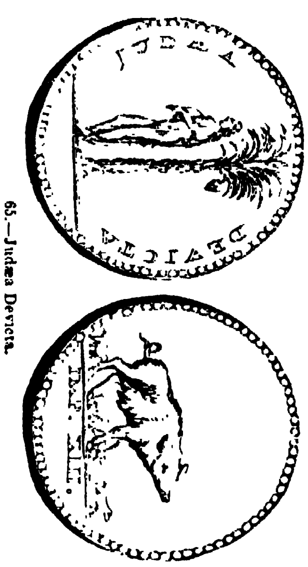
61.—The Phœnician Juniper.
Beryw Phenicaidd.



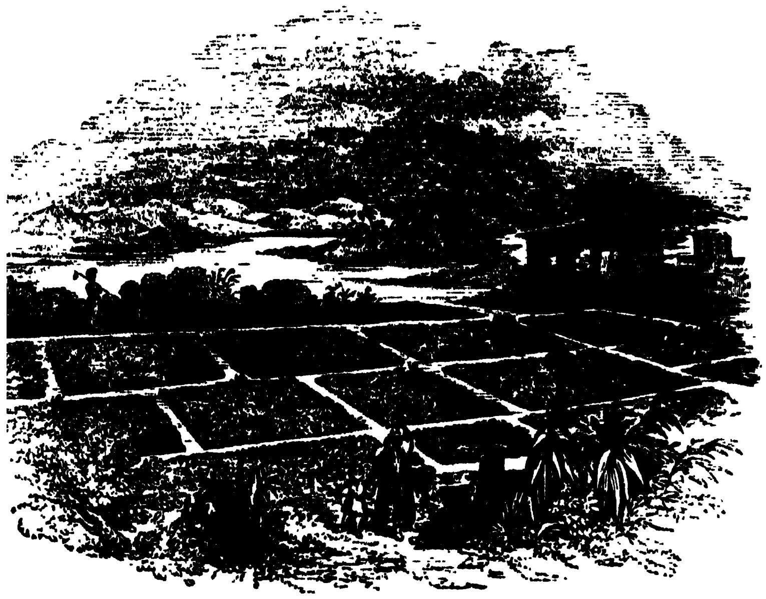
66.—Judæa Capta.
Judea Gaethgludedig.



59.—Isaiah. (Michael Angelo.)
Esaias.



65.—Judæa Devicta.
Judea Orchfygedig.



64.—Watered Garden.
Gardd Ddyfradwy.



60.—Cedars of Lebanon.
Cedrwydd Libanus.

THE PROPHETS.—ISAIAH.

OF this, the first in time and rank of the four greater prophets, we possess no authentic information beyond the few scattered facts which may be gathered from his own book and from those of the Kings and Chronicles.

That Isaiah was the son of Amoz is the only fact concerning his descent with which we are acquainted. This has suggested to some whether he was not a son of Amos the prophet, who certainly flourished before his time. But this question would not occur to any one acquainted with the Hebrew language, in which the name of this prophet is Amos and that of Isaiah's father Amoz or Amotz. Many of the Jews themselves, indeed, claim for Isaiah a prophetical pedigree, but they do this on the different and untenable ground that in all cases in which the father of a prophet is mentioned by name, he must have been himself a prophet.

Even a royal parentage has been claimed for Isaiah, but on no better authority than that of a Rabbinical tradition, which alleges that his father Amoz was brother to King Amaziah. All these conjectures seem to have been framed with the view of better accounting for his standing with king Hezekiah; but it is altogether unnecessary to suppose that this depended on his family and circumstances, or on anything save his piety and his vocation as a prophet.

From Isaiah vi. 1, vii. 1, &c., it has been concluded that Isaiah commenced his prophetic career in the year that king Uzziah died (750 B.C.). It is, however, possible that he had taken some part in public affairs a long while before, as it is expressly stated, in 2 Chron. xxvi. 22, that he composed complete memoirs of that prince's reign. At all events, he must then have been past his first youth; and if, as is usually alleged, he lived to the reign of Manasseh, he must have exercised the prophetic office for about fifty years, and could not well have been under the age of eighty when he died. For common knowledge it is, however, sufficient to understand that Isaiah prophesied in the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. That he lived in the reign of Manasseh, and that this monarch, enraged at his rebukes, commanded him to be sawn asunder, is a mere tradition which comes with no authority to us. It has, nevertheless, seemed to many that the nineteenth chapter bears strong evidence of having been written during that monarch's reign, and the allusion in Heb. xi. 37, to those who had been "sawn asunder" for their testimony to the faith, has been supposed to refer to him.

ISAIAH I.—V.

There is perhaps no sacred writer who affords more frequent and interesting allusions than Isaiah to the natural scenery of Palestine, its vegetation, and the culture of its soil. Many such occur in the present chapters.

THE CEDAR-TREES supply many noble images and allusions to this prophet. In Isa. ii. 12, abasement is threatened to every lofty thing, and in proceeding to enumerate the loftiest objects in the works of God and of man, "the Cedars of Lebanon" are mentioned first of all. See also Isa. ix. 10; xxxvii. 24; xli. 19; and xliv. 14. It has been doubted whether the tree which now bears the name of "Cedar of Lebanon" is that which is really denoted by the Hebrew word. Some rather strong arguments have been produced in favour of regarding the Phœnician juniper as the *Eres* (the Hebrew word rendered "Cedar") of the Scriptures. But upon the whole we prefer the usual opinion, for two reasons,—that there is no tree in Lebanon which so well meets the ideas suggested by the magnificent images connected with the tree by the Jewish prophets; and that its timber is still used for the purposes specified in the Scriptures.

Lebanon is still celebrated for its cedars, which are so often mentioned in Scripture on account of their supplying the largest and best timber for building with which the Jews were acquainted—as their own country, although not in those times so bare of wood as at present, was rather deficient in timber-trees. There are plenty of comparatively young cedars in different parts of Lebanon; but the attention of travellers is chiefly directed to a grove of them near a village called Eden, high up the mountains, which contains the largest and most venerable trees in all the mountains, and which seems to have done so in Scriptural times, for Ezekiel mentions "the trees of Eden" as "the choicest and best of Lebanon" (Ezek. xxxi. 16). Mr. Addison, in his 'Damascus and Palmyra,' thus speaks of these magnificent trees:—"About midnight we arrived at the summit, the moon was shining brightly, and we could distinguish the outlines of a glorious prospect around and below. The moonlight was sufficiently strong for us to see the cedars extending along an eminence beneath,—they looked like a clump of juniper-bushes, much disappointing us in their appearance. . . . . . After descending two hours, we approached the cedars, which now as much struck us by the magnitude and venerableness of their appearance as they had before done by their apparent insignificance. We could perceive the venerable old cedars throwing up their leafless branches above the younger ones, and as we approached the deep gloom cast by their wide-spreading branches, through which a few solitary moonbeams trembled, a feeling of awe came over us. Not a human dwelling was seen, and, fatigued and wearied, we lay down and slept under one of the largest of the trees.

"Daylight disclosed to us a grove of cedars, extending for near a mile, and the only green objects in sight; and a delicious prospect in this country, where trees are so rare. In the midst of the grove may be seen the venerable giant cedars, now only seven in number, throwing up their white leafless branches, like wide-spreading stag-horns, above the screen of green foliage that surrounds them; interesting as great curiosities of the vegetable world, from their magnitude and age, as well as from the associations connected with them.

"These cedars of Lebanon are held in great veneration by the inhabitants. The Christians celebrate an annual mass under their shade, and the Mussulmen hold them in the greatest respect from traditionary legends concerning them."

The oaks of Bashan, mentioned immediately after the cedars (Isa. ii. 13), are throughout the Scriptures described in terms of proverbial distinction; and even at the present day, it is in Bashan and the neighbouring districts beyond the Jordan that oak-trees, which are comparatively rare to the west of the river, take a leading part in the scenery of the wooded hills. The *Quercus robur*, however, which grows to so large a size and makes so imposing a figure among our own forest-trees, is not to be found in Bashan. The evergreen and prickly oaks are the most common, although other species are sometimes met with. With these two trees, as we learn from Lord Lindsay, many of the hills of Bashan and Gilead are covered to the very summits, and in descending to the arid plains the evergreen oak is the last by which the traveller is forsaken. He also mentions a variety of the evergreen oak of broader leaf than usual, and conjectures that this may be distinctively the oak of Bashan. But it would appear that the term "oaks of Bashan" does not denote any particular species, but merely indicates that the region was distinguished for the finest oaks in Palestine, which is actually the case at this day. The noble traveller describes the hills of Bashan itself as richly wooded to the summits with noble prickly oaks (*Quercus valonidi?*), a few pine-trees towering over them, and adds, "I never could have thought that the shrub I had seen covering the hills of Hebron could have attained such size and beauty, yet the leaf of the largest tree is not larger than that of the shrubs."

"*A cottage in a vineyard, a lodge in a garden of cucumbers*," are mentioned in Isa. i. 8. Both the "cottage" and the "lodge" were for the same purpose—for the use of the watchers stationed to protect the ripening fruit from the depredations of men or animals. As an isolated and solitary structure in the midst of large grounds, and as abandoned during the greater part of the year, when those which are of frailer materials, mere sheds or booths, fall to decay, they furnish an apt emblem of the desolation which the prophet describes. The terms "cottage" and "lodge" appear to describe the two different kinds of fabrics used for this purpose: one, a mere "booth which the keeper maketh" (Job xxvii. 18), from year to year, for the temporary purpose; the other, a small cabin of stone, which remains on the ground, and serves for many years. Sheds of both kinds are still used in Palestine for the purposes indicated.

Another allusion to gardens is supplied in Isa. i, 30, "*A garden that hath no water*." In the warmer parts of the Eastern countries, a constant supply of water is so absolutely necessary for the cultivation, and even for the preservation and existence of a garden, that should it want water but for a few days, everything in it would be burnt up with heat and totally destroyed. There is, therefore, no garden whatever in those countries but has such a certain supply, either from some neighbouring river, or from a reservoir of water collected from springs or filled with rain water in the proper season, in sufficient quantity to form an ample provision for the rest of the year. Solomon, in mentioning his gardens, does not fail to inform us that he also "made pools [reservoirs] of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees" (Eccles. ii. 6). The manner in which the water is distributed through the gardens and plantations, in small rills, for the purpose of irrigation, is shown in the engraving.



SUNDAY III.—BIBLE HISTORY.

BY the angels who had visited the tents of Abraham a precise time had been named for the birth of his Child. That long promised, long expected day at length arrived, and Sarah embraced a son to whom was given the name of ISAAC (1896 B.C.). Abraham was then a hundred years old, and twenty-five years had passed since this blessing had been first promised to him; and it is perhaps difficult to conceive the gladness which filled the hearts of the aged pair at this accomplishment of all their hopes.

The tenderness of the paternal heart towards Ishmael was unabated; but he was no longer even mistaken for the Child of the Promise, no longer Sarah's adopted son, and no longer his father's heir by that adoption. He had become the son of the bondwoman. As for Sarah, the lad, who had appeared of some consequence in her eyes so long as she had no hope of a child of her own, at once became as nothing in her sight; and what might have been merely a passive feeling in her, was turned into bitterness and active dislike, against both Hagar and her son, by the signs of discontent and even derision at her happy lot which they suffered to transpire. At the great feast which was held on the day that Isaac was weaned, these feelings were so offensively manifested, that Sarah was roused to anger, and she insisted with Abraham that they should be sent away from the camp. This demand, which she had a right of custom to make, was very grievous to Abraham because of his son; but having been assured from heaven that Ishmael, although not the promised heir, should for his sake become a special object of the Divine care, and that his posterity should become a mighty nation, his reluctance subsided, and rising early in the morning, he sent them away with a skin of water and such other provisions as the journey required.

It seems to have been the intention of Hagar to return to Egypt, to which country she belonged. But having lost her way in the southern wilderness, she wandered to and fro, till the water, which was to have served her on the road, was altogether spent. The lad, unused to hardships, was soon worn out. Overcome with heat, fatigue, and thirst, he seemed at the point of death, when the afflicted mother laid him down under the shade of a tree and withdrew to some distance that she might not witness his dying pangs. But God had not forgotten her. A Voice was heard in the solitude, uttering words of comfort and promises of peace. Thus encouraged, Hagar hastened to her son, raised him by the hand, and refreshed him from a spring of water which had been disclosed to her view. Painters and poets in representing this scene usually exhibit Hagar as bearing her son in her arms, and laying him in the shade. This is an error, for Ishmael was then fifteen or sixteen years of age, and, conformably with this, the Voice directed her to take him "by the hand."

After this they remained in the wilderness attached to some one of the nomade tribes by which it was frequented; and here the son of Abraham became a famous person, to whom many of the Arabian tribes have been proud to trace their origin.

The departure of Hagar and Ishmael restored peace to the tents of Abraham; and no incident of importance is recorded till Isaac had reached the age of about twenty years old, when it pleased God to subject the faith of the patriarch to a far more terrible trial than any to which it had yet been subjected. He was commanded to take his son to the land of Moriah, and there offer him up as a sacrifice to God. However the heart of the patriarch may have been wrung, whatever thoughts crossed his mind, he faltered not. When others were in danger, he had interceded importunately with God; but now, when his own happiness and the life of his son were in question, he was silent. This was the perfection of confidence in God. We should be in some doubt as to the precise grounds in which he took comfort; but the Apostle informs us that, feeling assured that God, who had promised him a posterity through Isaac, would undoubtedly perform his promise, he was persuaded that God would, if needful, even raise Isaac from the dead after the sacrifice had been accomplished (Heb. xi. 19).

In the morning Abraham set out on his journey, attended by two servants, who carried the wood for the holocaust. At the end of three days' journey Abraham discerned the appointed place (supposed by many to be the Mount Moriah on which the Temple eventually stood), and bidding the servants remain, he went onward with his son, who carried the wood destined to consume his own body. Isaac, seeing all this usual preparation for a sacrifice, inquired concerning the victim, which probably gave his father the opportunity of making known the command under which he was acting. That he did so is certain; for he could not by constraint have tied up the young man and laid him upon the altar. All was ready, the knife was uplifted to give the death-stroke, when the voice of an angel stayed his arm, and his attention was directed to a ram (probably of the four-horned species), which he gladly substituted for his son. Never were the promises made for the Father of the Faithful pronounced with such marked emphasis as in the words from heaven which rewarded this consummate act of high belief:—"By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore: and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice."

About twelve years after this Abraham lost the companion of his long pilgrimage, Sarah, who died at the age of one hundred and twenty-seven years. She was buried with due observance in the Cape of Machpelah near Hebron, which the patriarch purchased on this occasion, and which became the family tomb of the patriarch. Sepulchral caves, such as that in which Sarah was buried, are common in the East.

The fact that his camp now wanted a female head, soon reminded Abraham of providing a wife for his son Isaac. The measures which he took on this occasion manifest his anxiety to observe the family obligations which to this day constrain the heads of Arabian families to seek wives for their sons among the cousins or near relations; and not less do they evince his desire to keep the blood of the chosen race unmixed with that of strangers. He resolved to send his eldest and most confidential servant to the present seat of his family at Haran in Mesopotamia, to obtain thence a wife for Isaac; and before he set out he made him take a solemn oath that he would faithfully perform this charge. And very faithfully did he perform it.

With suitable presents, and with a train of camels corresponding to the dignity and wealth of his master, Abraham's servant set forth upon his remarkable mission. Sixty-four years had now passed since Abraham himself had quitted Haran, during which little intercourse appears to have been kept up between him and the elder branch of his family which tarried there. Some few leading facts concerning each other they might gather from passing caravans; and probably by this means Abraham knew that his eldest brother Nahor had been favoured with several sons, one of whom, named Bethuel, had a daughter called Rebekah, and a son named Laban (Gen. xxii. 20—24). On the other hand, the family in Haran appears to have been aware that Abraham still lived, and was in prosperous circumstances in the land of Canaan.

The pious servant of a pious master at length arrived at Haran. It was eventide when he came to the well outside the town, where he allowed the camels to kneel down for rest, knowing that the damsels of the place would soon be coming forth to fetch water for the family use, and knowing also that the daughters of the best families were not exempted from this service, he prayed the God of Abraham to indicate by a given sign which of all these virgins was the destined wife of Isaac. The virgins of Haran soon came flocking forth for water, when he accosted one of them as she came up from the well, and asked to drink a little water from her pitcher. "And she made haste and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said, Drink, my lord, and I will give thy camels drink also." *This* was the very sign which he had requested; and we may readily believe that it was with no small anxiety that he awaited the result. Having acknowledged her kindness by the princely gift of a frontlet and massive bracelets of gold, he ventured to ask whose daughter she was, and whether her family could afford him lodging. To his great relief and joy he learned that the damsel was no other than Rebekah, the daughter of his master's nephew Bethuel, and that there was ample accommodation in their dwelling for himself and his camels. On this the grateful servant could not refrain from blessing the God of Abraham, his master, on hearing which the damsel ran off with the strange tidings to her home. The brother Laban then hastened to the well, and brought the stranger to the house.

Arrived there, this model of faithful servants refused to eat until he had made known his errand and course of procedure. This of course implied a claim for Rebekah as the wife of his young master; and he ended with "And now if ye will deal truly and kindly with my master, tell me; and if not, tell me: that I may turn to the right hand or to the left." Bethuel and Laban answered with one



67.—Sepulchral Caves in the Cliffs of Wady Mousa (in Mount Seir).—Gen. xxiii.
Ogofau beddrodol yng Nghlogwyn Wady Mousa (yn Mynydd Seir)



71.—Woman veiled.—Gen. xxiv. 65.
Gwraig orchuddiedig.



69.—Girl giving drink to a thirsty traveller.—Gen. xxiv. 18.
Llangces yn rhoddi diod i deithiwr sychedig.



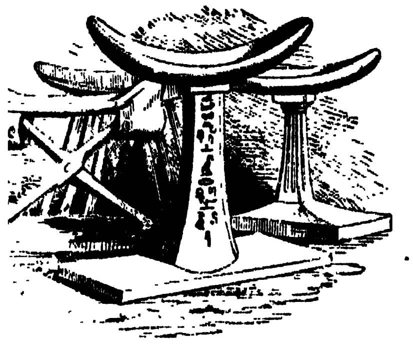
70.—Women on Camels.—Gen. xxiv. 61.
Gwragedd ar Gamelod.



68.—Well, with Camels.—Gen. xxiv.
Pydew, gyda Chamelod.



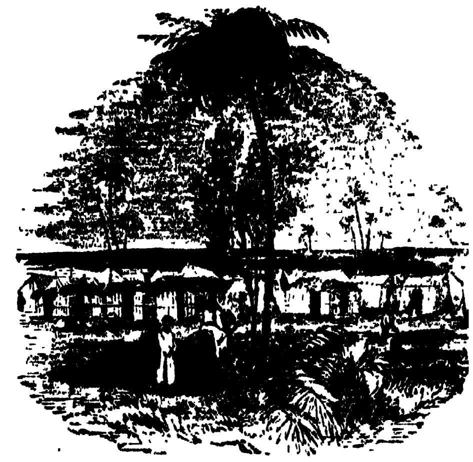
72.—Lentiles. *Ervum lens.*—Gen. xxv. 34.
Ffacbys. *Ervum lens.*



73.—Pillows of Stone and Wood.—Gen. xxviii. 11.
Gobenyddiau Ceryg a Choed.



74.—Oriental Shepherds.—Gen. xxix. 3.
Bugeiliaid Dwyreiniol.



81.—Booths or Sheds.—Gen. xxxiii. 17.
Bythod neu Bentai.



83.—Rachel's Sepulchre.
Beddrod Rahel.



75.—Laban searches for his Idols. (De la Hire.)—Gen. xxxi.
Laban yn chwilio am ei Ddelwau.



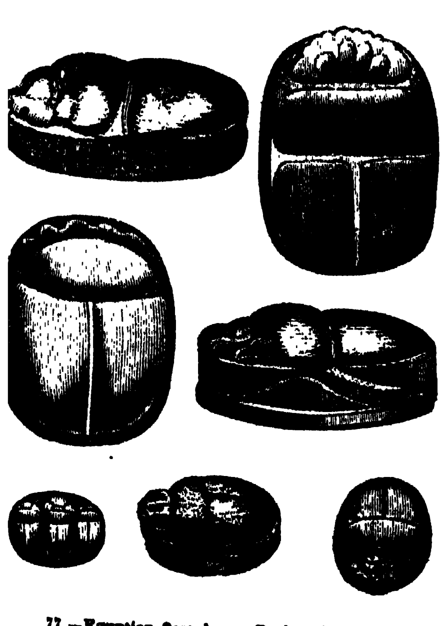
82.—Tower in the Desert.—Gen. xxxv. 21.
Twr yn y Diffeithwch.



76.—Egyptian Scarabæi. Engraved under-surfaces. Gen. xxxi. 19.
Delwau Aiphtaidd. Tan-wynebau Cerfiedig.



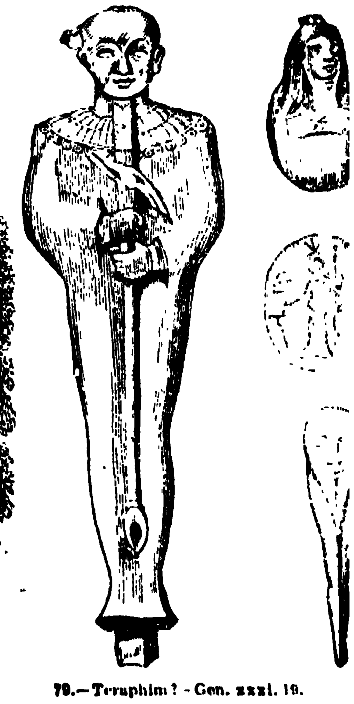
78.—Egyptian Amulets.—Gen. xxxi. 19.
Cyfareddau Aiphtaidd.



77.—Egyptian Scarabæi. Back and side view.—Gen. xxxi. 19.
Delwau Aiphtaidd. Gwelediad y cefn ac ochr.



80.—River Jabbok. Zerka.—Gen. xxxii. 22.
Rhyd Jabboc.



79.—Teraphim?—Gen. xxxi. 19.

voice, that they could not gainsay a matter which was so clearly under the Divine direction, and the consent of the damsel having been obtained, she was mounted on one of the camels the next morning, and with a joyful heart and many blessings the servant of Abraham commenced his homeward journey. Rebekah was accompanied by her nurse Deborah, for in the East nurses usually remain as attached dependents, and often accompany to the home which marriage brings her the maiden they have nourished.

As the party approached Beersheba, Isaac was walking out in the fields " to meditate at eventide." He saw and was seen of the advancing party, and when Rebekah heard from the servant that this was her destined husband, she covered herself with her veil, and as they approached she alighted from her camel. Isaac conducted the fair stranger to his mother's tent, the tent of the lady of the camp; and in her love—for he loved her greatly—found comfort for the death of his mother, which he had taken deeply to heart.

Not long after this Abraham himself took a second wife, named Keturah, by whom he had six sons. He lived to see them grow up, and sent them away to settle eastward with suitable portions, that they might not interfere with Isaac, his heir and the child of the promises. At length Abraham died, at the age of one hundred and seventy-five years, exactly one hundred of which he had spent in the land of Canaan. His great qualities and the dealings of God with him, while a sojourner in that land, have made his name one of the most illustrious in the world—a name preserved more than most in the general memories of men. His name is found in the history, traditions, worship, and annals of many nations. At this day the East is full of his renown; and the Jew, the Christian, and the Moslem look up to him as their natural or spiritual father.

Isaac was left the possessor of immense wealth, of that kind which forms the possessions of a pastoral chief. He continued to reside at Beersheba, without any other recorded trouble than the barrenness of his wife Rebekah. But at length, after twenty years of marriage, his prayers were heard, and two sons were given to him at one birth. The first-born was called Esau, and the other Jacob; and it had been intimated to Rebekah, before the birth, that not the elder, but the younger, was to be the heir of the promises. This directs our attention to Jacob. As the boys grew up, a marked distinction in their habits and character appeared. Esau was of active and rough temperament, and employed much of his time in hunting and the use of arms; whereas Jacob was of quiet and sedentary habits, abiding in the tents, and occupied among the flocks. Jacob was the favourite of his mother: but Isaac had preference for Esau, who manifested his filial duty by making his huntings the means of providing for his father the relishing food which his growing infirmities required.

A famine which afflicted the part of Canaan which he inhabited, inclined Isaac to withdraw into Egypt, but a Divine intimation induced him to go into the territories of Abimelech, the Philistine king of Gerar. In this more compact little state, the presence of so great a person was more sensibly felt than it had been in the thinly inhabited districts in which the patriarchs had hitherto encamped. The extent of his possessions was more clearly seen, and the rapid increase they, by a perversity not unusual, seemed to regard as at their expense.

Abraham had once been in that country, and had digged wells, which the Philistines, after he withdrew, had filled up—in order to extinguish that right to the soil which was created by forming wells therein. These wells were cleared out by Isaac, who also formed new ones; and he proceeded to cultivate the ground, which returned him increase a hundred-fold. The Philistines were, however, exceedingly averse to see a right of property in the soil created by these wells, and their opposition compelled the patriarch often to shift his encampment. But at length, seeing how rapidly his wealth increased, and believing that he was a special object of the Divine care, they deemed it more prudent to cultivate his friendship. Therefore, the king, attended by his officers, repaired to the camp of the patriarch, and they entered into a covenant of peace in behalf of themselves and of their heirs.

The uncertainties of the hunter's life are strikingly illustrated by the next important incident which we find recorded. Esau returned one day to the tents unsuccessful, and ready to perish with hunger. He found Jacob preparing a savoury mess of pottage, the odour of which attracted the intense longing of the famishing hunter, and for the enjoyment of it he readily surrendered the privileges which belonged to him as the birthright of the elder son. When he had leisure to reflect and to repent, he loved not the more that brother who, taking advantage of his needs, had exacted so costly a price for so small a benefit. The reckless character of Esau is further illustrated by his taking two Hittite wives, Judith and Bashemath, in defiance of the wishes of his parents, who, as he could not but know, were highly averse to any such connection with the people of the land.

Nevertheless, the now aged patriarch still desired to regard Esau as the heir of the promises, and feeling his infirmities daily increase, and his sight being entirely gone, he deemed it high time to bestow upon his still favourite son the important " blessing," which, like a modern will, would make over to him the headship of the tribe, and the temporal and spiritual benefits which were in fact or prospect connected with it. But first he desired some of that savoury venison with which his rude son knew so well how to gratify his enfeebled appetite. This interval gave Rebekah, who overheard the arrangement, an opportunity of urging her favourite Jacob to personate his brother, and thus add the coveted blessing to the birthright he had already won. Jacob urged some faint scruples, dictated more by the fear of detection than by virtuous principle, and at length consented. It was not difficult to impose upon the dulled senses of his blind father, and he received from him that free and full blessing which could not be recalled. Esau soon came: and the strong and fierce man wept like an infant when he learned that his last hope had been riven from him. He vowed to be avenged; and yet, even in his passion being regardful of his father's peace, he postponed his vengeance till after the patriarch's death, which was then believed to be near at hand.

Learning his purpose, Rebekah resolved to send Jacob out of the way to her own ancient home in Haran, where he might not only remain till his brother's anger had abated, but might obtain a wife more suitable than those which Esau had chosen. Having received the consent and blessing of his father, Jacob set forth alone upon his long journey. This was necessary for his safety—but how differently in a former day had the servant of Abraham gone the same way, with his gifts and his camels, to seek a wife for Isaac.

As he slept, with a stone for a pillow, at Bethel, he was cheered by a vision, in which he beheld the angels ascending and descending upon a ladder placed between earth and heaven, above which sat an august personage who declared Himself to be the God of Abraham and Isaac, and ratified to him in the fullest manner the blessings originally promised to them. This was accompanied by assurances and encouragements suited to his present circumstances, which filled him with gratitude, and gave him such a lively sense of the Divine providence, that he left Bethel a wiser and more single-minded man, and with a lightened heart pursued his way to Padan-Aram.

On arriving at the well outside the town, Jacob entered into conversation with some shepherds who were there to water their flocks, and heard from them some particulars concerning the family he had come to visit. While they talked, Rachel, the younger daughter of Laban, and therefore Jacob's first cousin, came to the well to water the home-flock, which was under her charge. The stranger assisted the damsel in watering her flock, and then made himself known to her, and accompanied her to the house of her father, where he was most cordially received. Laban soon perceived the great skill and experience of Jacob in " the shepherd's gentle trade," and gladly entered into an agreement with Jacob to give him his daughter Rachel as the reward of seven years' service. The marriage was accordingly celebrated with great rejoicings; but, by some deception, Laban contrived to substitute his elder daughter Leah, for whom Jacob cared little, in the place of Rachel; and, when reproached with his conduct, alleged that the custom of the country did not allow the younger to be married before the elder sister. He, however, offered him Rachel also for seven more years of his services, and, rather than be without one whom he so tenderly loved, Jacob consented. The depth of his affection for Rachel is beautifully suggested by the Sacred historian in one of those simple but most natural strokes of moral portraiture which are seldom found out of the Sacred book. " Jacob served seven years for Rachel: *and they seemed unto him a few days, for the love he bore to her.*"

This preference for Rachel led Jacob to treat Leah with some indifference or neglect; in consequence of which the Lord made Leah the object of his favour and gave her children, which were denied to Rachel. This induced Rachel to make use of her handmaid Bilhah, in the same capacity in which Hagar had been used by Sarah. Leah followed the example by making the same use of her handmaid Zilpah. By both there were children, and at length Rachel herself was blessed with a son, who received the name of JOSEPH.

SUNDAY III.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

WHEN King Herod saw that the Eastern magi had gone home without again visiting Jerusalem, his vexation was great, for he thereby lost all means of distinguishing from among all the infants of Bethlehem the one whom he had destined to destruction. He was not a man who ever paused at any steps necessary to the accomplishment of the designs which he had once taken into his mind. From this cause his reign was full of horrors; and much as we may be shocked, those who know his character feel no surprise to find that he at once determined to sweep away all the infants of Bethlehem under two years old, that the one he had doomed might not escape. This purpose was accomplished. The Evangelists give no particulars of the dreadful scene, and the mind willingly declines the contemplation of details so full of horror. No doubt the tyrant now thought himself relieved from the cause of his misgivings, not knowing that all this odium had been abortively incurred, and all this most innocent blood shed without any profit even to him—for his destined victim had escaped.

It may in some degree illustrate this transaction to bear in mind that Herod must at this very time have been suffering great torments from the painful malady of which he died. This complaint was a dreadful disease in the bowels; according to Josephus, a devouring fire seemed to rage within him, and his pains were unutterable, while his inner parts underwent a constant dying and corruption. His person became loathsome to all who approached him, and he was consumed by a fierce hunger which nothing could appease. This kind of disease was regarded by the Jews and other Asiatics as a chastisement especially reserved by God for the punishment of unrighteous and tyrannous kings; and certainly, such an ending of such a career is well calculated to call forth the thought, "Verily, he is a God that judgeth in the earth!"

In vain did Herod summon famous physicians from far countries to Jerusalem; in vain did he repair to the warm springs of Callirhoe;—there was no help for him, and he saw that his last hour was at hand. He then sent an urgent summons to the principal persons of Jerusalem to attend him at Jericho, and there caused them to be shut up in the hippodrome, leaving orders that they should all be slain as soon as he had expired. His avowed reason was, that, knowing he was hated by the Jews, he was resolved there should be mourning at his death. But a dead tyrant can no longer ensure obedience, and when he actually died they were set free.

In his last will Herod made a distribution of his dominions among his sons, which was in the main afterwards confirmed by the emperor Augustus. The Kingdom of Judæa he gave to Archelaus; to Herod Antipas, the tetrarchy of Galilee and of Peræa beyond Jordan; to Philip, the tetrarchy formed by the districts of Trachonitis, Gaulonitis, and Batanæa (Bashan), all beyond the Jordan.

Soon after this Herod the Great expired, thirty years after he had been declared king of the Jews by the Roman senate, and thirty-four years from his actual possession of the throne. He was honoured with a more magnificent funeral than any king of Israel before him; but few, if any, were the real tears shed at his death.

Meanwhile the Holy Family remained in Egypt. The gifts of the Eastern sages no doubt enabled them to travel thither, and to live there in comfort. But we have no authentic accounts of the travel or the sojourn. An old tradition of the Greek Church alleges that the family tarried at Hermopolis; and at a place called Matarieh, between Cairo and Heliopolis, corresponding to the situation of the ancient city of that name, there is a fountain at which it is pretended that the Virgin was wont to lave the infant Jesus, and which is on that account held in much veneration throughout the country.

When Herod was dead the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph, and enjoined him to return to the land of Israel. He accordingly took the young child and its mother, and returned into Judæa. It seems to have been his first intention to remain there, probably at Bethlehem; but finding that Archelaus reigned, and fearing that he might have inherited the temper of his father, it was deemed more prudent to proceed to Nazareth, which, being in Galilee, was under the different government of Herod Antipas.

The abode from infancy in Nazareth, coupled with the fact that Mary and Joseph belonged to that place, occasioned Jesus to be regarded and called "a Nazarene," although, in fact, a native of Bethlehem. This was afterwards often alleged as an objection to his being recognised as the Messiah; for it was well known (especially since the formal decision which the priests and scribes had communicated to Herod) that Bethlehem was the place from which the Messiah was to come. Hence the strongly expressed objection of some people, when at a future time his claim was under discussion—"Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scripture said that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" (John vii. 42).

BETHLEHEM derives all its celebrity from having been the birthplace of David and of Christ. It was, indeed, fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 6), but does not seem to have been ever of much consequence. It is expressly described as "small" by the prophet Micah (v. 2), in the very passage which pointed it out as the birthplace of the Messiah:—"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though thou be little among the thousands of Judah*, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel," &c. Ephrath (*the fruitful*) was the name which the place bore in the time of the patriarchs (Gen. xlviii. 7), and which was still sometimes used after it had acquired the name of Bethlehem. It is pleasantly situated about six miles to the south of Jerusalem, and stands upon the brow of a hill which commands an extensive view of the surrounding mountainous country. The hill itself is laid out in terraced vineyards, almond-groves, and plantations of fig-trees, watered by gentle rivulets that murmur through the terraces, and diversified by watch-towers and wine-presses. It is now a large village, chiefly composed of one long street of flat-roofed houses built with clay and bricks. The inhabitants are about three thousand in number, mostly native Christians. They are of a turbulent character, and much employed in the manufacture of rosaries and other memorials, which the pilgrims who visit the spot of our Lord's nativity are glad to purchase. A church, called the Church of the Nativity, has been built over the supposed site of this illustrious birth. The church is old, and is accounted the finest architectural building now remaining in Palestine. It contains a grotto, which is about twenty feet below the general level of the church, and is shown, with very little probability, as the place where the Saviour of men was born. This cave is lined with Italian marbles, and lighted by numerous lamps; and here the reverent pilgrim is shown the exact spot where our Lord was born, and of the manger in which he was laid.

NAZARETH seems to have been a small and unimportant village, for it is not mentioned either in the Old Testament or by Josephus. It is situated about six miles W.N.W. from Mount Tabor, and lies on the western side of a narrow oblong basin or depressed valley about a mile long by a quarter broad. The houses stand on the lower part of the slope of the western hill, which rises steep and high above them. It is a small and more than usually well-built place, containing about three thousand inhabitants of whom about two-thirds are Christians. The flat-roofed houses are built of stone, and mostly two stories high. The environs are planted with luxuriantly growing fig-trees, olive-trees, and vines; and the crops of corn are scarcely equalled through the length and breadth of Canaan. All the spots which could be supposed to be in any way connected with the history of Christ are, of course, pointed out by the monks and local guides, but on authority too precarious to deserve any credit, and with circumstances too puerile for reverence. It is enough to know our Lord dwelt here; that for thirty years he trod this spot of earth, and was familiar with the scenes which are spread around. Professor Robinson, looking around from the hill above, which commands an extensive prospect succeeded in realizing this more general point of view:—"I remained for some hours upon the spot, lost in the contemplation of the wide prospect, and of the events connected with the scenes around. In the village below the Saviour of the world had passed his childhood; and although we have few particulars of his life during those early years, yet there are certain features of nature which meet our eyes now just as they once met his. He must often have visited the fountain near which we had pitched our tent; his feet must frequently have wandered over the adjacent hills; and his eyes doubtless have gazed upon the splendid prospect from this very spot. Here the Prince of Peace looked down upon the great plain [of Esdraelon] where the din of battle so oft had rolled, and the garments of the warrior been dyed in blood; and he looked out too upon that sea over which the swift ships were to bear the tidings of his salvation to nations and to continents then unknown!"



84.—Virgin and Child. (Vandyke.)
Y Forwyn a'r Mab bychan.



85.—The Holy Family. Y Teulu Sanctaidd. (Sir Joshua Reynolds.)



86.—Virgin, Child, and St. John. (Raphael.)
Y Forwyn, y Mab bychan, a St. Ioan.



88.—Cherubim and Seraphim. (Reynolds.)
Y Cerubiaid a'r Seraphiaid.



87.—Virgin, Child, and St. John. (Raphael.)
Y Forwyn, y Mab bychan, a St. Ioan.



90.—Psalm xvi.



89.—Psalm xv.

LORD, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle? or who shall rest upon thy holy hill?—1.

Psalm xviii.

He sent out his arrows, and scattered them: he cast forth lightnings, and destroyed them.—14.



92.—Psalm xviii.



91.—Psalm xvii.



100.—Striking the Lyre From Herculaneum.

Taro'r Delyn.
O Herculaneum.



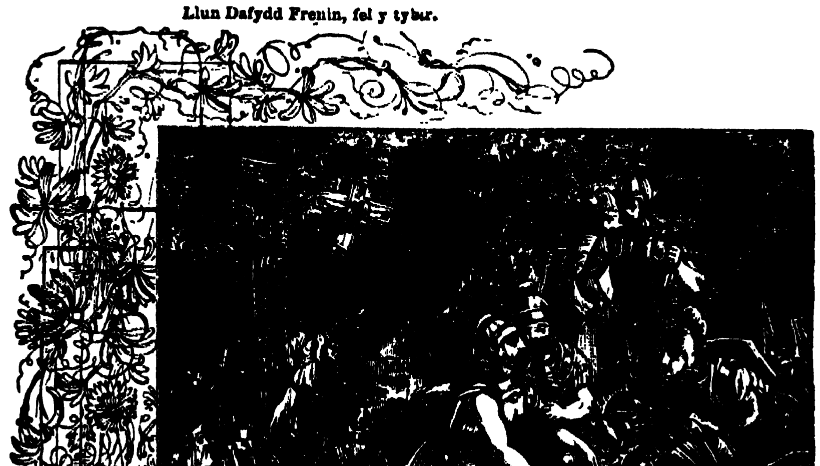
99.—Tuning the Lyre.
From Herculaneum.

Cywiro'r Delyn.
O Herculaneum.



98.—Figure supposed to represent King David. Engraved in Donius's "Lyra Barberina."

Llun Dafydd Frenin, fel y tybir.



93.—Psalm xix.

THE heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work.—1.

Psalm xxii.

They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.—18.



96.—Psalm xxii.



94.—Psalm xx.



95.—Psalm xxi.



97.—Psalm xxiii.

SUNDAY IV.—THE PSALMS.

HEBREW LYRIC POETRY.

COULD we implicitly follow the titles of the Psalms and common opinion, we might be led to conclude that the lyric poetry of the Hebrews, as well as the largest portion of the Psalms themselves, was a production of David and his contemporaries. There are, indeed, a few specimens of such poetry before his time; but they scarcely enter into consideration compared with the fertility of that period in which he lived. In the earlier history it is but occasionally that the voice of poetry is heard, as in the song of Moses at the Red Sea, of Deborah, and of Hannah. We are therefore surprised after so few attempts at lyric poetry, to see so accomplished and fertile a poet as David rise up, as it were, all at once, with several others in his company. So rapid a progress pre-supposes some adequate occasion, some preparatory steps. Seeking for these, many critics have lighted upon the schools of the prophets, which existed in the immediately preceding times of Samuel, if they were not founded by him. Here it is assumed that the composition of Psalms was cultivated and brought to perfection, and that here David and others received their education in minstrelsy. But this position, when closely examined, rests on no solid foundation. If David had frequented the schools of the prophets, he must have been known to Samuel; but there is not the least sign that the prophet knew him; there is much to show that he did not know him till he went to anoint one of Jesse's sons at Bethlehem, up to which time David appears to have been entirely occupied with his father's flock (1 Sam. xvi. 6). Indeed, the great intimacy of David with all that belonged to the shepherd's life, which supplies so many beautiful and picturesque images to his Psalms, evinces that his youth was entirely spent in the care of flocks, and not in the schools of the prophets. In fact, David was already famed for his minstrelsy before Samuel knew him (1 Sam. xvi. 18); and as music and song were not in those ages separated, we may conclude that as a poet also the son of Jesse was already known and celebrated. Natural taste and capacity, joined to the much practice which open-air leisure of the shepherd's life afforded, might have done quite as much for David as that mere artificial system which is supposed, without good reason, to have prevailed in the schools of the prophets. Indeed the well known tendency to connect poetry and music with the pastoral life, as followed in more genial climates than our own, shows that David, left so much alone with his flock, with his God, and with nature, was in the best possible school for creating such a poet and such a minstrel as he became.

Thus far a *pastoral* origin may be ascribed to David's poetical character: but it was also *popular;* for notwithstanding the scantiness of the indications of a pre-existing taste for lyric poetry among the Hebrews, there is quite enough to prove that it did not spring at once out of the dry ground in the time of David, but existed in at least a sufficient degree to impart the bent of mind which his pastoral occupation enabled him with much advantage to cultivate. This is shown even by the short pean with which the maidens of Israel celebrated David's own victory over Goliah—

> "Saul smote his thousands,
> But David his ten thousands"—

which exhibits a species of poetry truly lyric of its kind, though rude and uncultivated. It also shows a rough example of that sort of poetical parallelism which in the Psalms of David himself is carried to a high degree of perfection. Still earlier, and in addition to the songs of Moses, Deborah and Hannah, to which we have already alluded, we find, particularly among the women, the practice of music and the dance, with which song could not fail to be connected. Jephthah's daughter came out to meet her father with timbrels and with dances (Judges xi. 34). At Shiloh the damsels held a yearly festival with dances. It has been questioned whether Samson was not a minstrel, from his having been called "to play" before the Philistines (Judges xvi. 25), which, even if understood, as it usually is, of the dance, does not exclude the accompaniments of song and instrumental music. Facts like these, however insulated, seem abundantly sufficient to evince the existence of a poetical taste and capacity among the Hebrew people before the appearance of David, and relieve us from any necessity of sending David himself to the schools of the prophets for his poetical education.

PSALMS XV.—XXIII.

In connection with some of the preceding remarks, our attention is drawn to the pastoral images contained in the Psalms now before us. Indeed, there is no single Psalm in which a larger number of images are embodied than in the twenty-third.

The poet, gathering comfort in all troubles from the conviction of the loving-kindness, no less than of the power of the God whom he had served, argues, "The Lord is my shepherd: *therefore* can I want nothing" (Psalm xxiii. 1). This image is obviously suggested by the care, the forethought, the management, and the tenderness exercised by the Eastern shepherds to provide for and to defend their flocks in the unfrequented and wild regions into which they were often led for pasture. In another Psalm (lxxx. 1) this comparison is even more emphatically produced: "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel—thou that leadest Joseph like a flock." In the same sense kings also are described as standing in this pastoral relation to their people; and although David did not originate this comparison, no man ever lived who could use it with the same degree of force and propriety as one who, like him, had been called from the pastures to a throne. This may be instanced by reference to Psalm lxxviii. 70—73: "He chose David also his servant, and took him away from the sheepfolds. As he was following the ewes great with young ones, he took him, that he might feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance. So he fed them with a faithful and true heart, and ruled them prudently with all his power." To apprehend the force of this idea we should recollect some of the peculiar conditions of the ancient pastoral life. The Hebrew patriarchs, and in a great measure their descendants, when settled in Canaan, did not usually intrust their flocks to menials and strangers, but either tended them in person or intrusted them to their sons or near relations. The flock which David himself tended was that of his father Jesse. In later times, the increase of population and of the town life, led to the use of hired shepherds; but the difference of treatment which the flock received under the different circumstances was most strongly felt by the Jews, and was, on one occasion, most pointedly indicated by our Saviour, who, in comparing himself to the shepherd-owner of a flock, says, "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But *he that is an hireling*, and not the shepherd, *whose own the sheep are not*, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep and fleeth.... The hireling fleeth *because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.*" (John x. 11—13). This position of our Saviour is admirably illustrated by the conduct of David himself, who combated and slew both a lion and a bear in defence of his father's flock (1 Sam. xvii. 34, 35). If, therefore, the sheep under the care of the shepherd-owner may rest in quiet, confident of lacking nothing which the care of that shepherd can provide, how much more he whose shepherd is the Lord!

The Psalm pursues the image by considering that this kind and powerful shepherd "shall feed me in a green pasture, and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort." This is but one of many beautiful passages of Scripture alluding to the practice of the Eastern shepherds in leading their flocks from one region to another in search of green pasture. In winter and early spring the rains compel the roots and seeds of the desert to shoot, which in summer were kept down by excessive drought. But the moisture clothes the wilderness with verdure, and with the succulent and nutritive herbage in which the flocks luxuriate and prosper. And when the periodical drought returns to the wilderness, the shepherd leads off his flocks to the mountains, the streams, and the habitable districts where herbage yet remains. Thus it is an important point of the Eastern shepherd's character, that he should possess such a knowledge of the country and its pasture-grounds as may enable him to move his flock from one point to another with the moral certainty of finding good pasturage in the place to which he is going. The bad, that is the ignorant shepherd exposes his flock to the danger of perishing from hunger or fatigue: from hunger, if no pasture is found in the expected place, from fatigue, in hurrying the flock from one place to another, in the vague expectation of finding that which he knows not where to find.

The Eastern shepherd has a staff of considerable length, with which he keeps his sheep in order. This is of great use both to the shepherd and the sheep. It helps the former to guide his sheep in the right way, to keep them from danger, to extricate them from difficulties, and to collect those that stray. Hence the rod or staff is throughout the Scriptures described as a source of confidence, and not of fear, to the sheep. It is to this the Psalmist alludes, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death (*i. e.* through dangerous and dreadful places), I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."

SUNDAY IV.—BIBLE HISTORY.

MORE than satisfied with the services of Jacob, and well assured that the flocks had been much advantaged by his superintendence, Laban still desired to avail himself of his services after the fourteen years had expired; and Jacob on his part was not unwilling to remain on any terms which afforded him a prospect of acquiring a provision for his family. It was then settled that Jacob, for the services of seven other years, should be paid in kind, by reserving for his own use such of the sheep and goats as might happen to be parti-coloured, which is not usual in any flocks, and very unusual in those of the East. In consequence of this arrangement, the flock under the charge of Jacob was carefully severed from that to which Laban and his sons attended; and thenceforth whenever a parti-coloured lamb or kid was born in the flock of Jacob, he set it apart as his own. Through the special providence of God, who at Bethel had promised to care for and make prosperous the grandson of Abraham, an extraordinary proportion of parti-coloured animals was thenceforth born, and soon furnished a large flock, which Jacob committed to the separate charge of his elder sons. By the time the seven years had expired, this flock had increased amazingly, and with its produce Jacob had been enabled to obtain large possessions of what usually constitutes the wealth of a pastoral chief—"much cattle, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and camels, and asses."

It was well known to Jacob that his prosperity was regarded with no pleasure by Laban and his sons, who deemed all his gains as so much loss to them. He thence became apprehensive that any attempt to remove with his property would be resisted; and as he was now resolved to return to the land of Canaan, from which he had so long been absent, he went away secretly while Laban was at the distance of three days' journey. A pastoral migration, with slow-going sheep, young animals, women, and infants, can never be a very rapid movement. Hence we are not surprised to find that he was overtaken by Laban by the time he reached the Mountains of Gilead. We may be sure that Laban's purposes were not very amicable. But the night before he came up with Jacob, he was warned in a dream to take heed how he molested one for whom God cared. This changed his purpose; but being now so near, he went on, and joined the migrant party while at rest. His sterner purposes now sunk to sharp complaints and strong expostulations that no opportunity had been afforded him of embracing his daughters and grandchildren, and of sending them away with music and with song. He also complained that his gods—certain figures called *Teraphim*, used as domestic idols—had been stolen from him by some of Jacob's party. This charge was indignantly repelled by Jacob, who gave him authority to search for them, and denounced death upon any person in whose possession they might be found. Little did he know in what peril he thus put his beloved Rachel: for she had them: having secreted them from some unknown but probably superstitious motive. They were hid in the furniture of her camel; and as this formed her seat in the tent, they escaped the search of her father; who returned home the next day, after having entered into solemn covenants of peace with the man he had so wrathfully pursued.

Jacob's next care was concerning Esau, with whose present state of mind towards him he was by no means acquainted. But he knew that he had established himself in the regions of Mount Seir, and had there acquired great power as a military chief. He deemed it prudent to send a most respectfully worded message, apprising him of his return home. The messengers returned with no other intimation than that Esau himself was coming to meet him with four hundred men. This intimation filled Jacob with real and well-grounded alarm. He made the best arrangements in his power to meet the exigency, with the view, on the one hand, of mollifying his brother, and, on the other, of securing the retreat of his rear (consisting of the women and children), in case the van should be assaulted by Esau's troop. He then sent his people across the river Jabbok, and remained behind himself, probably for the sake of that solitary "communing with God" in which the Hebrew patriarchs found so much of their strength and safety. Here he was comforted and encouraged by the deep meanings of a mysterious conflict with an angel of God, who seemed unable to prevail over Jacob till he put forth a supernatural power, and disabled him for the time, by causing the sinew of his thigh to shrink when he laid his hand thereon. It was then that the name of JACOB (*supplanter*) was changed to ISRAEL (*a prince of God*)—"Because (said the angel) as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

Halting still upon his thigh, but greatly encouraged, the patriarch passed over the river as the morning rose, and, on reaching the top of the opposite bank, beheld Esau and his troop approaching in the distance. Whatever may have been the intentions of that rude but not ungenerous person, he was fairly softened by the marks of respect and consideration which he received, as he passed along the purposely extended line of flocks, and herds, and shepherds: and when at length he came up with Jacob, who bowed before him, as one doubting of his reception and his doom—he could contain himself no longer, but "ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell upon his neck and kissed him:—and they wept." Blessed tears were these:—the tears of a full heart; "tears such as angels shed," if angels ever weep.

Esau would very willingly have escorted Jacob the rest of his way; but the latter, intending to proceed very leisurely, respectfully declined the offer, and his brother then returned to Mount Seir, which continued for many ages to be ruled, and was in a great measure peopled, by his descendants, and hence obtained the name of the land of Edom and of Idumæa.

Before he crossed the Jordan, some stay was made by Jacob at Succoth, where his camp was formed of booths or sheds, made of the wood which was then, and is even now, abundant in that quarter.

On crossing the river, he did not at once rejoin his father, who was still living, but proceeded to the vale of Shechem, where Abraham also had formed his first encampment in the land of Canaan. Here he remained until the terrible vengeance which was taken upon the people of Shechem, by the sons of Jacob, for an outrage upon their sister Dinah, made it prudent for him to quit that neighbourhood. He went to Bethel. There he built an altar, and worshipped God, in grateful remembrance of the encouragements which had been on that spot vouchsafed him on his way to Padanaram.

After this, Jacob journeyed southward to visit his father. On the way, when near Bethlehem, his beloved Rachel died in giving birth to a second son, whom the mother, in her dying grief, called Benoni (*son of my sorrow*), but which name the father afterwards changed to Benjamin (*son of my right hand*). A tomb, of Moslem construction, called "Rachel's Sepulchre," at this day marks the supposed place of her burial.

After about thirty years' absence, Jacob at length joined his aged father Isaac, who was then at the old encampment of the family at Mamre, near Hebron. The concise narrative gives no particulars of the interview between the father and son; and it would appear that Rebekah had been some time dead. Isaac himself survived the re-union with his son several years, and died at the age of one hundred and eighty years (1716 B.C.).

The interest of the Sacred history now turns to Jacob's sons, and in particular to Joseph, the first, and for a long while the only son of his much loved Rachel. Jacob's family consisted of twelve sons, the founders of the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Their names were—

REUBEN, SIMEON, LEVI, JUDAH, ISSACHAR, and ZEBULON, sons of Leah.

GAD and ASHER, sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid.

DAN and NAPHTALI, sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid.

JOSEPH and BENJAMIN, sons of Rachel.

Joseph was far more dear to his father than any of his other sons. He made no secret of this, as a wise father would perhaps have done. Nay, rather he gloried in making it known, and even went so far as to clothe him in a peculiarly handsome dress—"a coat of many colours," as a mark of favour and distinction. These marks of partiality were very displeasing to Joseph's brothers, and made him odious in their eyes. These feelings were strengthened by certain dreams which Joseph dreamed in early youth, and which seemed to prefigure some unimaginable superiority and greatness to him. At one time they were binding sheaves in the field, when, lo! their sheaves rose up and made obeisance to his sheaf. At another time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars made obeisance to him. Another cause of dislike was found in the fact that when they had been abroad with the flocks, Joseph was in the habit of reporting to his father their misconduct, and of bringing upon them the dreaded rebuke of their parent.

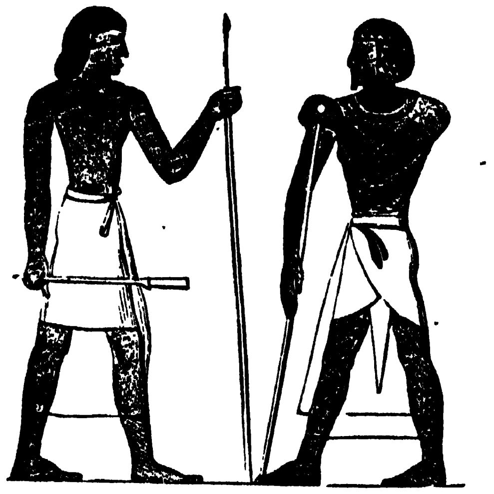
One day, when Joseph was about seventeen years old, he was sent by his father, who had kept him at home, to seek his brethren,



101.—Joseph relating his Dreams to his Brethren. (Raffaelle.)—Gen xxxvii.
Joseph yn mynegi ei Freuddwydion i'w Frodyr.



102.—Balm of Gilead.—Gen. xxxvii. 25.
Balm o Gilead.



103.—Egyptian Stewards.—Gen. xxxix. 4.
Goruchwylwyr Aiphtaidd.



104.—Egyptian Lady.—Gen. xxxix.
Boneddiges Aiphtaidd.



105.—Egyptian with a tray of Meats on his head.—Gen. xl. 16.
Aiphtwr â chawell o Fwyd ar ei ben.



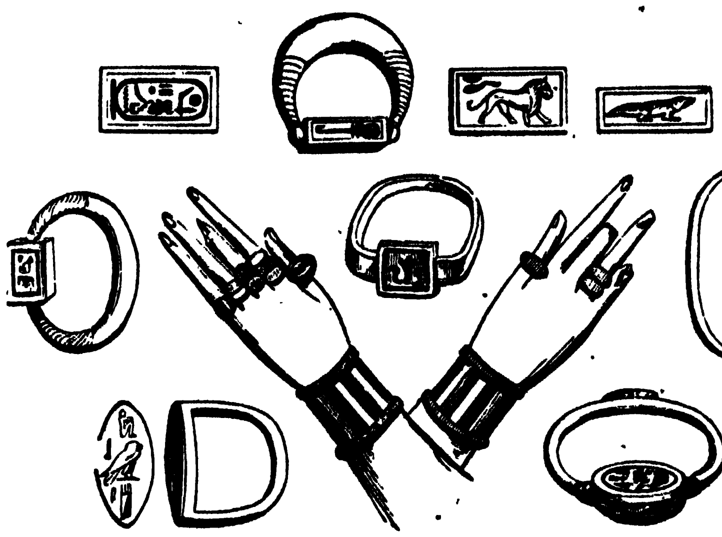
107.—*a* Triticum sativum; *b* Holcus sorghum.—Gen xli. 5.



106.—Joseph interpreting the Dreams of the Butler and Baker. (Spagnoletti.)—Gen. xl.
Joseph yn deongli Breuddwydion y Trulliad a'r Pobydd.



108.—Egyptian King on his Throne.—Gen. xli. 14.
Brenin yr Aipht ar ei Orsedd.



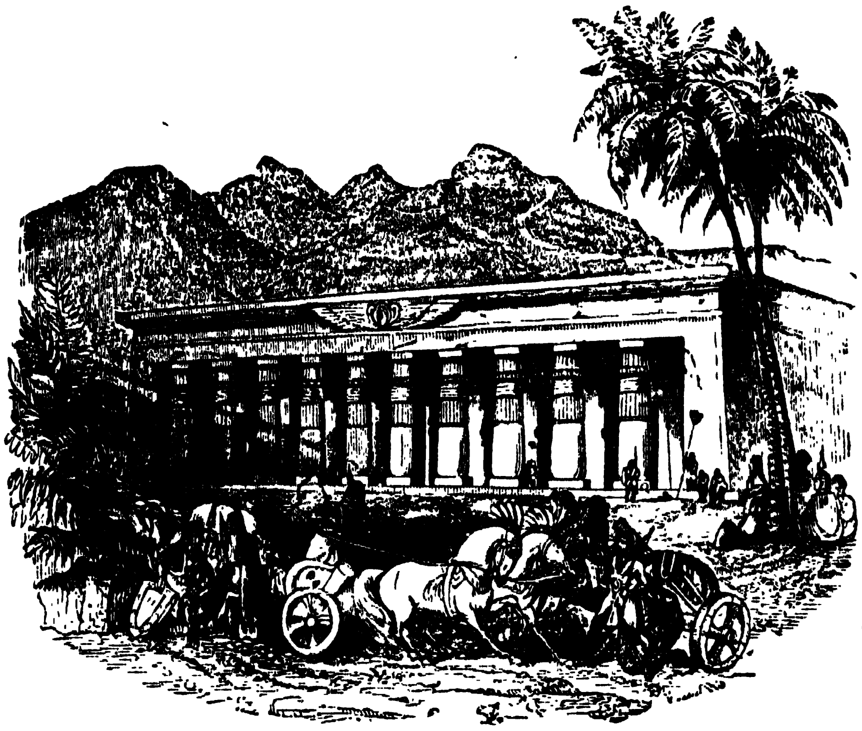
111.—Signet Rings of Ancient Egypt.—Gen. xli. 42.
Sel-fodrwyau yr Aipht Hynafol.



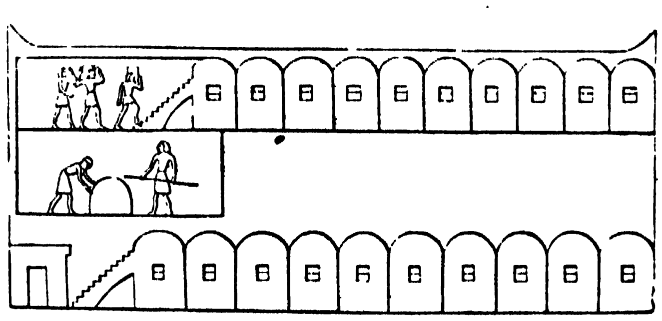
116.—Egyptian Wine-cups.—Gen. xliv. 2.
Cwpanau Gwin yr Aipht.



112.—Females of Priestly Families. Official Dresses.—Gen. xli. 45.
Benywaid Teuluoedd Offeiriadol. Gwisgoedd Offeiriadol.



107.—Pharaoh's Palace.—Gen. xli.
Llys Pharaoh.



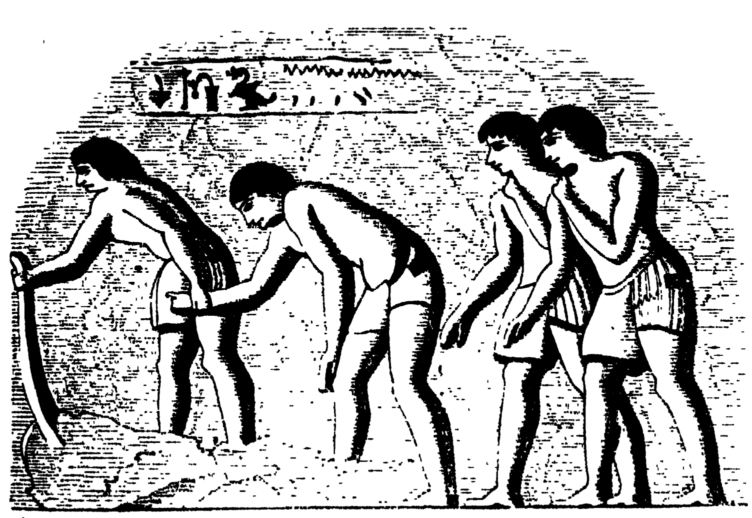
109.—Egyptian Granary.—Gen. xli. 35.
Ystordy Aiphtaidd.



110.—Storing Corn.—Gen. xli. 35.
Ystorio Yd.



113.—Nuts.—Gen. xliii. 11.
Cnau.



115.—Bowing before a Public Officer.—Gen. xliii. 26.
Ymgrymu ger bron Swyddog Gwladol.



114.—Almond-tree.—Gen. xliii. 11.
Pren Almon.

who had for some time been out in distant pastures, and bring back an account of their welfare. Joseph found them at Dothan. They knew him afar off by his coat of many colours, and immediately began to plot against his life. They had certainly killed him on the spot, but for some scruple, suggested by Reuben, of shedding a brother's blood. They therefore cast him into a dry cistern, intending to leave him there to perish, and to inform their father that he had been destroyed by a wild beast.

Soon after, however, they observed the approach of a caravan of Arabian merchants, proceeding with balm and other precious drugs to Egypt, and it immediately struck them that they might quite as safely, less guiltily, and with some profit besides, dispose of the unhappy Joseph by selling him for a slave to these travelling dealers. They accordingly drew him up out of the pit, and sold him for twenty pieces of silver. They then took his coat, the envied coat of many colours, and, after dipping it in the blood of a slaughtered kid, they sent it to their father. The agonized father immediately received the conviction they desired. "It is my son's coat (he said); an evil beast hath devoured him: Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces!" He mourned long and sorely for his lost son; and when at length time brought some calm to his feelings, he continued faithful to that one affection of which Rachel, whose idea lived to him in her sons, had so long been the true centre; for his love was now transferred to Benjamin, his youngest child, and the only one by her who remained to him.

Meanwhile, Joseph was taken down to Egypt, and was there sold to one of the officers of the royal court. In this country there then existed an imperial court, with a minutely organized government, an ecclesiastical establishment, a military force, and civil institutions —all bearing the stamp of an advanced stage of civilization, and of a condition of society very different from that which we have left behind us in Palestine.

Joseph's diligence, probity, attention, and fine qualities soon recommended him to his master Potiphar, in whose confidence he rose so high, that all the affairs of the household were eventually left in his hands.

Now Joseph was a very handsome man, and it happened that he attracted the too favourable notice of his master's wife. She tempted him to sin. But he remembered his God, he remembered the generous confidence of his master, and firmly refused. Seeing there was no hope, the woman's love turned to vengeful hatred, and she resolved to effect his ruin. To this end nothing seemed to her more effectual than to accuse him of attempting the very crime into which she had vainly endeavoured to draw him. And it was effectual; for Potiphar was wroth, and cast his slave into prison. But even in prison Joseph's useful talents and engaging disposition still availed him. He soon acquired the entire confidence of the governor of the prison, who gave all the other prisoners into his charge.

Among those who were sent into the prison after Joseph had been thus favoured, were two important officers of Pharaoh's court, his chief butler, and his chief cook, or baker, who, from the nature of their offices, we should suppose to have been accused of some attempt to poison their royal master in his food or drink.

Dreams have always been much regarded in the East; and one night the butler and baker both had dreams which troubled them greatly. The butler dreamed that, in the discharge of his office, he presented the wine-cup into Pharaoh's hand; the baker dreamed that he was carrying upon his head baked meats for the royal table, when the birds of the air descended and carried them away. Joseph interpreted the dreams to signify, that before three days had passed the butler should be restored to his office, and the baker put to death. And so it happened. On Pharaoh's birthday inquiry was made into the matter, and the baker was beheaded, and the butler was restored to his place. Joseph had earnestly represented his case to this butler, and had implored him to use his recovered influence in his behalf. But the prosperous have little remembrance for the unhappy: and the butler altogether forgot Joseph, until, in the good providence of God, an occasion arose which brought him to remembrance.

The king himself was troubled with two dreams, which, although composed of different materials, were obviously one as to any import which might be collected from them. In the first, Pharaoh thought that, as he stood beside the fertilizing Nile, seven fair and full-fleshed kine came up out of the water, and were feeding in a meadow, when seven gaunt and lean kine came up after them, and devoured them all. Then, seven ears of good and full-bodied corn seemed to spring up, all upon one stalk; and after awhile came up seven thin and starveling ears, by which the former were eaten up. Yet the lean kine and the lean ears were none the better for that which they had eaten. These dreams seemed to have some unusually marked significance, and Pharaoh sent for the wise men of Egypt, requiring of them an interpretation. But this dream was beyond the depth even of their pretensions, and they could give none.

This brought to the butler's mind the Hebrew prisoner, whose interpretation of his own and the baker's dreams had been so remarkably fulfilled. He mentioned the circumstances to the king, who instantly sent to require his presence. Hastily shaving himself and putting on becoming raiment, Joseph accompanied the messengers to the palace. The king related his dreams; and Joseph said they were to be regarded as warnings from God of coming events, against which suitable provision should be made. The dreams denoted, first, seven years of great and unexampled plenty, to be followed by seven years of excessive dearth. He therefore sagely counselled that the superabundant grain of the fertile years should be bought up by the government, and stored for use during the years of famine; and he ventured to suggest that some able and discreet man should be appointed, with proper officers under him, to give effect to this great operation throughout the country. Then said Pharaoh—"Forasmuch as God has showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art. Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou." Saying this, the great king took from his finger the signet-ring, the impress of which gave the force of royal authority to any decree or order on which it was placed; and then he caused him to be arrayed in robes of honour; upon his neck was also placed a chain of gold, by which we are doubtless to understand one of those rich ornaments of wrought gold, such as are in the Egyptian monuments seen upon the neck of kings and nobles. Thus gloriously arrayed, Joseph—whom the morning saw a prisoner and a slave—was placed in the second of the royal chariots of state, and conducted in grand procession through the streets of the metropolis, while the heralds proclaimed before him the honours to which he had been raised.

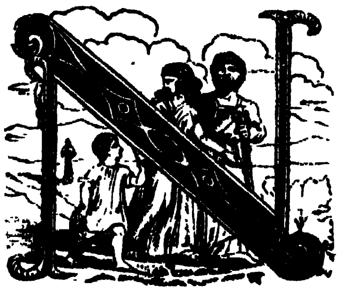
Joseph having thus been naturalized, and having received the name (*Zaphnath-paaneah*) and dress of an Egyptian, was no longer regarded in that country as a foreigner, but as a noble and a minister of state. In the East it has never been unusual for foreigners and slaves to rise to such distinctions. No doubt Joseph was well able to support the high position in which he now appeared. Thirteen of the best years of his life had been spent in Egypt; and this time would have more than sufficed for a man of much less aptitude and talent than Joseph to acquire an intimate acquaintance with the manners and language of the people among whom his lot had been cast. One thing he wanted—family connections and the influence which they would give in the country—and, above all, such connection with the priestly caste, which was then and long after all-powerful in Egypt. One unconnected with this caste could not long hope to maintain his influence, or to work out his plans without opposition and hindrance. The king of Egypt felt this very strongly, and therefore lost no time in securing to Joseph the undisturbed enjoyment of the rank and power to which he had raised him, by bestowing upon him in marriage Asenath, the daughter of Potipherah, priest of On, which place was afterwards known among Greek writers by the name of Heliopolis.

The account of that part of the Bible history which contains the sojourn of the Hebrews in Egypt, has of late years received interesting illustrations—we say not confirmation, for it needed none—from the Egyptian monuments, and from critical researches in history. From such sources we now know that Potipherah means "he who belongs to the sun;" it is a very common name on the monuments, and was from its signification especially appropriate for the priest of On, "the city of the sun." We also know that among the Egyptian colleges of priests the one at On took the precedence, and consequently that the high-priest of On must have borne the first rank among that powerful body. The great antiquity of religious worship at On is also attested by the monuments. Wilkinson says, "During the reign of Osirtasen (whom he makes contemporary with Moses), the temple of Heliopolis was either founded or received additions, and one of the obelisks bearing his name evinces the skill to which they had attained in the difficult art of sculpturing granite."

The part which the king himself took in bringing about this marriage, is satisfactorily accounted for when we remember that the sovereigns of Egypt were invested with the highest sacerdotal dignity, and were therefore not merely the civil, but the ecclesiastical superiors of the whole priesthood.

By this marriage Joseph had two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.

SUNDAY IV.—LIFE OF CHRIST.



NOT more than one incident of our Lord's childhood is recorded in the Scriptures, and that occurred when he was twelve years of age. There have indeed been many spurious anecdotes of this period, some of which, picked up in the days of ignorance, still linger in the memories of uneducated people. These originated in certain traditions and Apocryphal Gospels, some of which still exist among the curiosities of literature, but which no one regards as entitled to the slightest credit in any of the statements which they offer. The canonical Gospels are the only sources of our real information concerning Jesus, and to them we must adhere.

But before Jesus attained the age of twelve years some changes had taken place in Palestine. Judæa had ceased to be a kingdom, and was become a Roman province, with a Roman governor. This would at first seem to have been a disadvantage to the Jews. But it was not so. The government of the Herodian family was never considered by them as native, and was never popular among them. The tyrannous conduct of Archelaus in his government rendered him perfectly odious to both Jews and Samaritans; it was in consequence of their united complaints to the Emperor that he was, after a proper investigation of the circumstances, deposed from his ethnarchy or (as the Jews called it) kingdom, and banished to Vienne in Gaul. At the earnest desire of the same parties Judæa and Samaria were then constituted a Roman province, of which Cyrenius or Quirinius was appointed the first Prefect or Governor. We are not, however, to suppose that this arose from any attachment to the Roman government on the part of the Jews. Far from it. They detested the Romans and their government. But they feared that another member of the Herodian family might be put in the place of Archelaus; and of two evils, all sensible men thought even the stern but passionless rule of the Romans, directly exercised, far preferable to the harassing and vexatious tyranny of the petty despots and mock sovereigns to whom they had been subject. In effecting this change of government, the complete enjoyment of their own laws and religion was continued to the Jews. The power of life and death was indeed taken from them, but they were allowed to try offences in their own way, and the Governor seldom failed to confirm and execute the sentences of their tribunals.

This change of government took place in the year 10 A.D. of the actual year from Christ's birth, but in the year 7 A.D. of the vulgar era. Most of our readers know that at the time when the birth of Christ was assumed as the era of Christians, a mistake of three or four years was made in the calculation, that event having taken place so much earlier than was then assumed. For general purposes it is proper to retain the vulgar era, although known to be wrong; but as our purpose is limited to the life of Christ, and as within that narrow range it is highly desirable that the dates should be facts, we shall date from the real year of Christ's birth, assuming it to have been three years before the vulgar era: the addition of three will, therefore, in all cases reduce the date to the common account.

The law of Moses required that all the males of fit age in Israel should three times in the year appear before God, at the place of his altar and sanctuary. These times were, at the feast of the Passover, of the Pentecost, and of Tabernacles, of which the first was by far the most important as a matter of obligation, and the most generally observed. Children were not usually taken to Jerusalem till twelve years of age, at which time they were deemed to come under the obligation of this law, and then commence their periodical attendance at Jerusalem. Women were not required to take these journeys, nor did they usually do so; but they seldom failed to accompany their sons when they went for the first time to discharge a duty to which much importance was attached by the Mosaical institutions, and which marked the point of transition from childhood to adolescence. The son then assumed one of the responsible obligations of manhood, and in one point of view the first attendance at Jerusalem had the same import and significance as the assumption of the *toga virilis* by the Roman youth. It was therefore one of those marked points in the life of a son in which mothers wish to take part, and which they love to celebrate. We have in this the reason why Jesus was accompanied not only by Joseph but by Mary, when, at the age of twelve years, he went up to the Passover-feast at Jerusalem. Indeed had not Mary been one of those women whom the duties of home allowed, or religious feeling constrained, to accompany their husbands to Jerusalem, at least at the Passover, her presence would alone have sufficed to point out the date and occasion of the visit, even had the age of Jesus not been specified.

This, the first visit to Jerusalem, was an occasion to which every male child in Israel looked forward with eager expectation and desire. Conceive the glad assemblage of neighbours in the early morning, outside the town or village, and the animated interchange of salutations and farewells till the appointed voice cried "It is time to depart." Then they marched onward leisurely, with minstrelsy and psalms, and as they went were joined at the meeting of the roads, and in the villages, by new parties bent on the same object—their happy faces suiting well their holiday attire. They needed no provision for this journey; for wherever they passed they were received with shouts of joy and blessing; and before every door tables laden with bread, honey, and dates were set forth for their refreshment. Conceive the pride of the lads who were for the first time privileged to join this cheerful pilgrimage; conceive the sorrow of those who were not yet of the due age, when those who were going thus up to "the city of the Great King," and to walk in the courts of his "holy and beautiful house," passed on leaving them behind.

When they drew near the city, parties who had already arrived, and many of the stated inhabitants, would hasten forth to meet the new-comers and conduct them to their respective quarters. At that season no inhabitant of Jerusalem considered his house as his own. The city was the city of the whole people, not of the inhabitants alone: and when Israel came up to appear before Jehovah, every citizen regarded his dwelling as belonging to his brethren as much as to himself. Every house was thus filled with strangers, and the master was usually the worst accommodated person in it. But the utmost liberality of the inhabitants could not provide lodging for all the vast multitudes which repaired on these occasions to Jerusalem. A large proportion of the pilgrims, therefore, remained in tents during the festival. The whole environs of Jerusalem were then turned into an encampment, and all the streets and open places, and all the hills and valleys around the city, were covered with tents. But the feast was at the finest season of the year; the days were balmy and the nights enjoyed the full moon, so that those who remained altogether without shelter experienced little inconvenience.

Having celebrated the feast in Jerusalem, the party from Nazareth returned; and it was not until the evening of the first day's journey that Mary and Joseph became alarmed at the absence of their son, whom they had supposed to be with some kinsfolk or neighbours in another part of their large company. But as in such cases the different members of the same family join each other in the evening camp, and as Jesus came not, and could not be found, they returned the next day to Jerusalem to seek him there. This return occupied the second day. On the third day they searched the city, and at length found him in the Temple, "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and his answers." (Luke ii. 46, 47.) We are not to suppose that he was in the building of the Temple itself, which none but the priests might enter, but in the area of the Temple—in one of the courts or porticoes, where the doctors of the law used to sit and deliver their instructions. Neither are we to suppose that he thus early, and among these venerable persons, took the part of a teacher, for the allusion to his "questions" and his "answers" is quite sufficiently explained by our knowledge that the Jewish doctors pursued such a plan of instruction as dealt much in interrogation on the part both of the teacher and the taught. The fact that he sat among them does not require that explanation; for they might naturally wish to show this indulgence towards so extraordinary and highly-gifted a child.

In answer to the gentle remonstrance of his mother, who said, "Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing:" Jesus answered, "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" This was a hard saying, and was not understood by those that heard it; but Mary, ever mindful of his mysterious birth, kept this among the other hard sayings which she pondered in her loving heart.

They then returned to their home in Nazareth, where Jesus rendered that willing obedience which children owe to their parents. This obedience he rendered not only to Mary, but to Joseph, as his reputed father, to whom he owed his living, and who seems to have instructed him in his own trade of a carpenter. Thus Jesus remained many years, "increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."



117.—Ministering Angel, by L. Signorelli, from the Chapel in the Duomo at Orvieto.

Angel Gwarcheidiol, gan L. Signorelli, o Gapel yn y Duomo yn Orvieto.



118.—Angels from the Gates of San Giovanni. (Ghiberti.)

Angylion o Byrth San Giovanni.



119.—Virgin and Child. (Correggio.)

Y Forwyn a'r Mab bychan.



120.—Virgin, Child, and St. John. (Annibale Carracci.)

Y Forwyn, y Mab bychan, a St. Ioan.



121.—The Good Shepherd. (Murillo.)

Y Bugail da.



122.—St. John in the Wilderness. (Reynolds.)

St. Ioan yn y Diffeithwch.



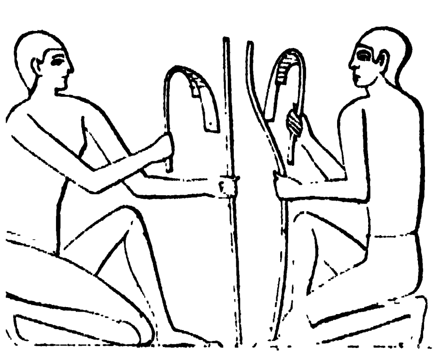
124.—"Seraphim." A supposed analogous figure, from a Persian Sculpture at Mougr Aub.—Isa. vi. 2.

"Seraphiaid." Darlun tybiedig gogyfartal, o gerflad Persiaidd yn Mougr Aub.



125.—Village of Shiloah.—Isa. viii. 6.

Dwfryn Siloah.



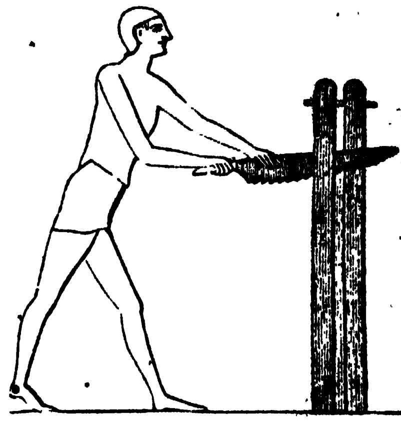
127.—Egyptian Carpenters with Axe or Adze.—Isa. x. 15.

Seiri Aiphtu. ld gyda Bwyell.



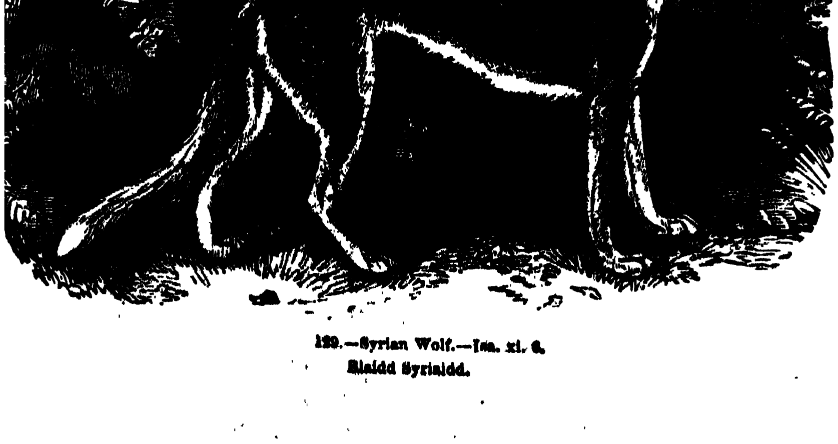
130.—Syrian Leopard.—Isa. xiii.

Llewpard Syriaidd.



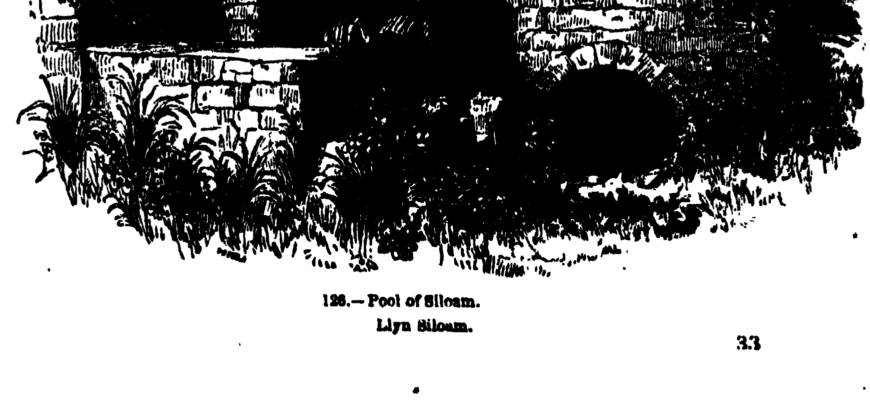
128.—Egyptian Carpenter with Saw.—Isa. x. 15.

Saer Aiplitaidd gyda Llif.



129.—Syrian Wolf.—Isa. xi. 6.

Blaidd Syriaidd.



126.—Pool of Siloam.

Llyn Siloam.

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SUNDAY V.—THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

WE have the assurance of an apostle that "*all* Scripture is profitable;" but the prophecies of Isaiah have in all ages been deemed eminently profitable for reading in the public services of Christian worship. The qualities which have acquired for Isaiah the character of the Evangelical Prophet indicate the grounds of this judgment. There are other parts of Scripture which refer more or less to the Messiah; but in Isaiah the coming Christ, his birth, his actions and teaching, his sufferings and death, and the blessedness and glory of his future kingdom, are the predominant and constantly recurring themes. All these are indicated with so much circumstantial detail, between seven and eight centuries before the events actually took place, that there is no portion of Scripture which contains the same amount of evidence for the Divine origin of *both* the Jewish and Christian dispensations, or which so clearly evinces that the Messiah promised to the fathers is already come, and that Jesus of Nazareth is he. Our Saviour was sensible of this, and more than once appealed to the testimony of Isaiah concerning himself.

The literary character, or style, of Isaiah's prophecies, has engaged the close attention of many eminent scholars, who have been in general so far acted upon by their subject, that their remarks on this prophet's style are invariably the finest parts of their own writings. Indeed, the peculiar force and energy of this style is felt by every reader; and even under the disadvantage of a translation, every one is conscious that he is reading poetry, and that too of the highest order. Bishop Lowth says:—"This prophet abounds in such transcendant excellencies that he may properly be said to afford the most perfect model of prophetic poetry. He is at once elegant and sublime, forcible and ornamented; he unites energy with copiousness, and dignity with variety. In his sentiments there is uncommon elevation and majesty; in his imagery the utmost propriety, elegance, dignity, diversity; in his language uncommon beauty and energy; and, notwithstanding the obscurity of his subjects, a surprising degree of clearness and simplicity. To these we may add that there is such sweetness in the poetical composition of the sentences, whether it proceed from art or genius, that if the Hebrew poetry is at present possessed of any remains of its native grace and harmony, we shall chiefly find them in the writings of Isaiah; so that the saying of Ezekiel may most justly be applied to this prophet:

> "Thou art the confirmed exemplar of measures,
> Full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty!"

To this we may add the less eloquent, but more discriminating, statement of De Wette. "The prophecies of Isaiah, both in form and substance, are to be ranked among the noblest productions of the golden age of prophetic literature. The discourse is, for the most part, oratorical; it rarely contains symbols or parables. The style is noble, concise, rich in images and thoughts, and rarely indulging in enumeration or antithesis. It makes (in the original of course) a moderate use of a play upon words; but it is without harshness and sudden transitions. The rhythm is strong and full, often running out into beautiful periods. The thoughts are earnest, natural, and free. Sometimes the style is sublime; sometimes it is full of a high inspiration. There is but one parable in the book, and that is effective (v. 1—6): there is but one vision, and that is simple and sublime (ch. vi.). It contains but few symbolical actions, and these are performed without any pretensions."

As we may have occasion to present the reader with such remarks on other of the Sacred writings, we may here introduce the remark with which Dr. Henderson, in his excellent translation and commentary of this prophet, prefaces his observations on the same subject. "Though the prophets were the subjects of Divine inspiration, there is no reason to suppose they were bereft of the mental peculiarities which constituted their individuality of character, or that they employed any other style or manner of writing than what was natural to them. It cannot, therefore, be improper to inquire into these peculiarities, or to treat of the respective diction of each, as we should those of merely human authors, only care being taken to cherish due and becoming reverence for the Holy Spirit, to whose infallible regulation and control it was constantly subject."

ISAIAH V.—XIII.

The prophecies of Isaiah are almost as abundant in images drawn from the animal as from the vegetable kingdom, and from the processes of agriculture. Thus in one of the present chapters (xi. 6), there is a very striking allusion to the WOLF and the LEOPARD. In the highly figurative description of the peace which shall reign under the Messiah's kingdom, occurs the beautiful verse:—"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and young lion, and fatling together; and a little child shall lead them!"

The WOLF is not often mentioned in Scripture; but when it does occur, it is usually as opposed to the flocks; and hence the significance of the image which makes its dwelling with the lamb a symbol of peace. The disposition of the wolf to prey especially on those animals which are under the protection of man, and which have, apart from him, but imperfect means of escape or defence, makes the wolf the natural enemy of the flocks in every country; and conformably to this, is the character which the Scripture gives to him. So, in the parable of the Good Shepherd, "the hireling fleeth on the appearance of the wolf," and "the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep" (John x. 12): and, in like manner, St. Paul, comparing false teachers to wolves, says, "I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the sheep" (Acts xx. 29). And as a sort of antithesis to our text, occurs the question of the son of Sirach, "What communion is there between a wolf and a lamb?"

The rapacity of the animal is the other circumstance on which chiefly the Scriptural allusions to the wolf turn. Hence corrupt judges, extortionate governors, and all who are "greedy of gain," are compared to "evening wolves;" the phrase itself alluding to the peculiar activity of the animal when he first roams abroad in the evening. From all these references to wolves, it is manifest that these animals were formerly very common in Palestine; and although not now of very frequent occurrence, there is no part of Syria or Palestine in which they are not occasionally found. They keep to the woods and open country, and seldom venture so near to the town as the fox: but the villages as well as the flocks often suffer from their depredations. An old traveller (Morison) names them among the animals of Samaria; Seetzen says that they are common near the sources of the Jordan; Lord Lindsay saw a wolf near Mount Carmel; the Rev. V. Monro saw one in the country of the Philistines: they are scarce in Syria, but are said to be not unfrequently seen in the deserts of Arabia Petræa.

The LEOPARD could not have been uncommon in Palestine; for not only is it several times mentioned, but there were several places which bear its name. That name is *Nimr*, whence such names of places as Nimrah (Num. xxxii. 3; Beth-Nimrah (Num. xxxii 36; Josh. xiii. 27); waters of Nimrim (Isa. xv. 6; Jer. xlviii. 34); and it is even supposed that the name of Nimrod may be traced to the same source. It feeds more on wild animals than the wolf; but it is still an enemy of the flocks, especially of the goats, and hence the force of the present image, which describes the leopard as lying down with the kid. The leopard is, however, more frequently coupled with the lion than with the wolf; and in this there is much fitness, the lion and the leopard being of the same great feline tribe, and their habits very similar. The feline habit of the animal in watching its prey, and then springing suddenly upon it, are the same as that of the lion (as described in p. 10), and of the cat. This habit is significantly noticed by a prophet (Hos. xiii. 7):—"I will be unto them as a lion; as a leopard by the way will I observe them." The swiftness and agility of the leopard are so remarkable, that one species (the Cheetah or hunting Leopard) has been in the East much employed in hunting. This did not escape the notice of Habakkuk, who, in describing the swiftness of the Chaldean horses, could only say "they are swifter than leopards." So also "A leopard shall watch over their cities; every one that goeth thence shall be torn in pieces" (Jer. v. 6). The beautiful manner in which the skin of this animal is spotted is well known. In this respect no variety of the leopard excels that of Syria and Palestine. We might expect to find some reference to this in Scripture, and, accordingly, there is a striking one in Jer. xiii. 23, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots," &c.

The leopard still exists in Palestine. Different travellers in that country have mentioned tigers, panthers, leopards, ounces; but the leopard is the animal really intended by all of them, none of the others being found in the country. From the engraving, which is copied from Ehrenberg's exact figure of the Syrian species as observed in Mount Lebanon, it will be seen that it is one of the most beautiful varieties anywhere found.

SUNDAY V.—BIBLE HISTORY.

DURING the seven years of plenty, Egypt was carefully subjected to the course of operations which Joseph had at first recommended to the king of Egypt. He made a tour through the country to organize the operation of purchasing and storing up the redundant produce, and to see that his intentions were properly executed. The superabundant produce of every district was stored away in granaries in the towns of that district: and we are told, "Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering, for it was without number." These labours of Joseph are placed vividly before us in the paintings upon the monuments, which show how common the store-house was in ancient Egypt. In the tomb of Amenemhe at Beni-Hassan, there is the painting of a great store-house, before whose door lies a large heap of grain, already winnowed. The measurer fills a bushel in order to pour it into the uniform sacks of those who carry the grain to the corn magazine. The carriers go to the door of the store-house, and lay down the sacks before an officer who stands ready to receive the corn. This is the overseer of the store-house. Near by stands the bushel with which it is measured, and the registrar who takes the account. At the side of the windows there are characters which indicate the quantity of the mass which is deposited in the magazine. (Rosellini, ii. 314, &c.) Compare this with the indication in the verse just cited, that the stored grain was carefully measured, until the enormous quantity of the increase would not allow this to be done.

But at the predicted time this plenty ceased, and was followed by the most terrible scarcity which had ever been known. This also lasted seven years. But there was plenty of corn in the store-houses; and as long as the Egyptians had money with which to purchase out of the government stores, all was well. But when all the money of Egypt had found its way into the royal coffers, the nation cried to the government for bread. A nation could not be allowed to starve while the granaries were still full of corn. The king left the matter entirely in the hands of Joseph, who agreed to take their cattle in exchange for corn. This resource lasted them a year; when nothing remained to the people but "their bodies and their lands," they cried "Buy us and our lands for bread, and we and our lands will be servants unto Pharaoh." Joseph took them at their word, and on these terms undertook to feed them to the end of the famine. The whole dispersed population was then removed into the towns containing the granaries, that the corn might be conveniently doled out to them; and in the last year of the famine seed was given to them, with which they might sow, and resume the cultivation of their lands, as tenants of the crown, at a rent of one-fifth of the produce.

This famine was not felt in Egypt only, but throughout all the neighbouring regions. It was felt in the land of Canaan, and the family of Jacob soon began to suffer from lack of corn. It then transpired that corn might be obtained in Egypt; and Jacob lost no time in sending his sons—all except Benjamin—across the desert to purchase the needful supply.

It seems that the permission to purchase corn was only granted to such foreigners as obtained special permission from Joseph, before whom, therefore, the ten brethren were bound to make their appearance. The ancient dreams began, in the mysterious providence of God, to be fulfilled, when they bowed themselves low and reverently before this august personage, "the lord of the country," little conceiving that he was the brother whom they had so long ago sold for a slave, and supposed to be long since dead. Him they could not know: but he knew them at once, and controlled with a strong effort the generous emotions which filled his bosom. Ignorant of their present state of feeling, he was apparently alarmed at the absence of his own brother Benjamin. He could not but fear that they might have acted treacherously towards him also; and this probably induced him to make those experiments upon their present dispositions which form so remarkable a portion of this striking history. By assuming an austere manner and charging them as spies, he succeeded in eliciting from them such an account of themselves, as informed him that his aged father was still living, and that his brother Benjamin tarried with him at home. The governor of Egypt could not but have been touched when they described themselves as "twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and behold the youngest is this day with our father, *and* ONE *is not.*"

Still, however, maintaining the tone he had assumed, Joseph persisted in his charge, and required as a proof of their statement that one of their number should be sent back for the absent brother, while the rest were detained as prisoners in Egypt. They were then thrust away ignominiously to the prison-house, and kept there the following night. But in the morning Joseph again sent for them, and in a milder tone they were assured that, if they were indeed true men, no harm should happen to them; and it was decided that they should all be allowed to go back excepting one, who should be detained as hostage for their return to Egypt with their youngest brother. Dismayed at the predicament in which they had become involved, the brethren looked one upon another, and the same thought rose at once to their minds, that at length the cry of their brother's blood had been heard in heaven; and that at length the punishment of their sin had come upon them. This they said aloud to one another in their own language; and little did they think that the illustrious person before whom they were, heard and understood, and that their words struck upon his heart: he turned away and wept.

The brethren departed, leaving Simeon behind. The sacks which they had brought were filled with corn, and a further supply for the road was given to them. Thus they returned to their father; and on opening their several sacks, were astonished and somewhat alarmed to find in them not only the grain, but the money which they had paid for it. This in some degree confirmed the report which they made to their father of the strange and harsh conduct of the man—the lord of the country. Jacob, however, could not endure the idea of sending Benjamin with them to Egypt: "Me have ye bereaved of my children," said he, mournfully: "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and now ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me!" But he was mistaken. All these things were for him. All were working together for the good of him and his.

The question stood over for a time; but when the supply of corn was exhausted, the matter could no longer be delayed. The brethren were in too much dread of the austere personage in Egypt to yield to the pressing instances of their father, who urged them to go without Benjamin; and, finding that their firmness in this point could not be overcome, he gave a reluctant and sorrowing consent. This time no precaution was omitted which was deemed likely to soothe and satisfy the harsh "ruler of Egypt." They took back again the money which had been found in their sacks; and they bore from Jacob a present of the choice products of Palestine, which he knew must be acceptable in Egypt. It was composed of "a little balm, a little honey, spices, and myrrh, pistachio-nuts, and almonds."

They returned to Egypt, and stood once more in the presence of Joseph. No sooner did he perceive them, and discover that his Benjamin, the son of his mother, was among them, than he directed his steward to "slay, and make ready" a sufficient feast, for that all these men should dine with him at noon. They were accordingly conducted to the great man's residence, where water was given them to wash their weary feet. Joseph came home at noon, and finding them in waiting, spoke to them. He asked if their father, the old man of whom they had told him, was well; and they bowed themselves very low, and answered, "Thy servant, our father, is in good health." He then seemed first to observe Benjamin, and asked, "Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me?" and, without waiting an answer, said, "God bless thee, my son:" and then, dreading to display his mastering emotions, he hastily withdrew, to give vent to them in his chamber.

At the dinner which followed, it seems that, although the brethren sat in the same room, they did not sit and eat together with Joseph, who sat apart by himself, while his Egyptian friends also sat apart by themselves. The reason for this is given—"Because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination to the Egyptians" (Gen. xliii. 32). Not merely as Hebrews, however, but as foreigners. And this is remarkably in accordance with Herodotus, who tells us that the Egyptians abstained from all familiar intercourse with foreigners, since these were unclean to them, because they slew and ate the animals which were sacred among the Egyptians. That Joseph also sat alone, and not with the other Egyptians, is strictly in accordance with the great difference of rank and with the spirit of caste which prevailed among the Egyptians.

The brethren were placed according to their seniority by the



144.—Couching Lion.—Gen. xlix. 9.
Llew ymgrymol.



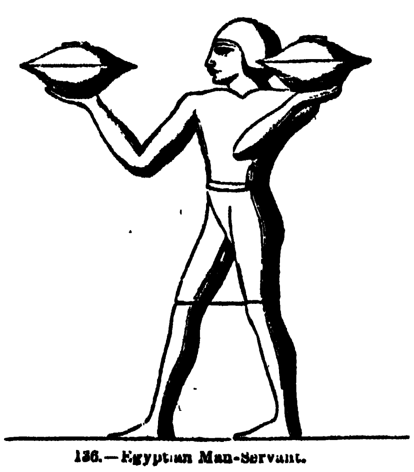
131.—Princes of Pharaoh.
Tywysogion Pharaoh.



132.—Princes of Pharaoh.
Tywysogion Pharaoh.



137.—Egyptian Maid-Servants.
Gwasanaethferched Aiphtaidd.



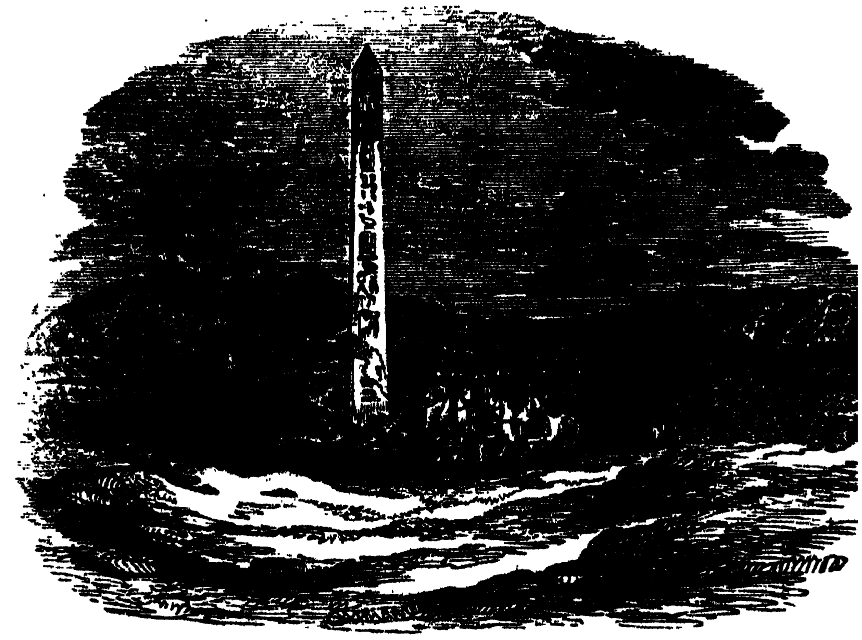
136.—Egyptian Man-Servant.
Gwasanaethwr Aiphtaidd.



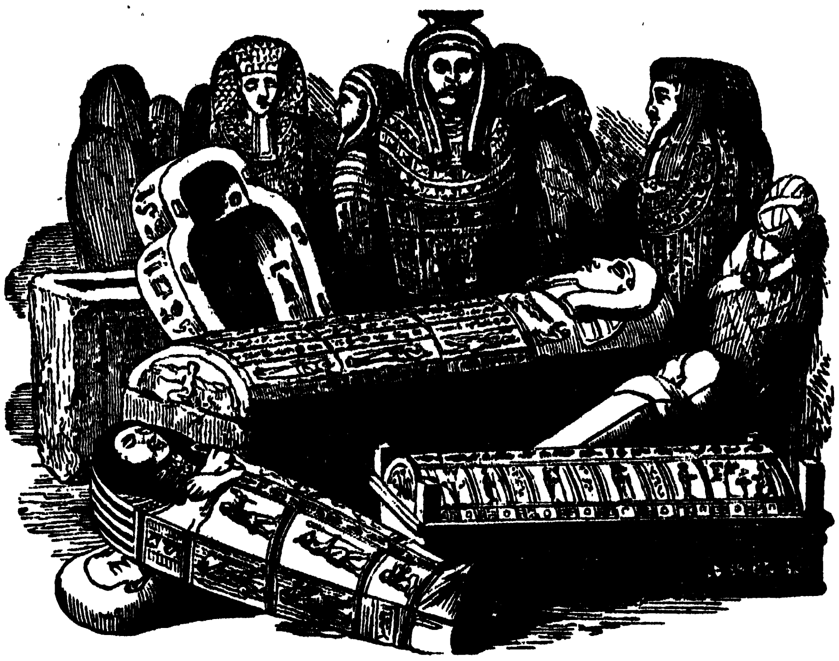
135.—Bedouins and Travellers bargaining for a slave.
Bedowiniaid a Theithwyr yn cyttuno am gaethwas.



134.—Egyptian Worship.
Addoliad Aiphtaidd.



133.—On, or Heliopolis.
On, neu Heliopolis.



147.—Mummy Cases and Marble Sarcophagi.—Gen. l. 26.
Amwisgoedd Mymmïaidd a Marmor Sarcophagi.



143.—Overseer of Cattle.—Gen. xlvii. 6.
Pen-bugail.



146.—Part of an Egyptian Funeral Procession, with acts of Mourning.—Gen. l. 26.
Rhan o Ymdaith-Gladdedigol Aiphtaidd, gyda gweithrediadau Galarnadol.



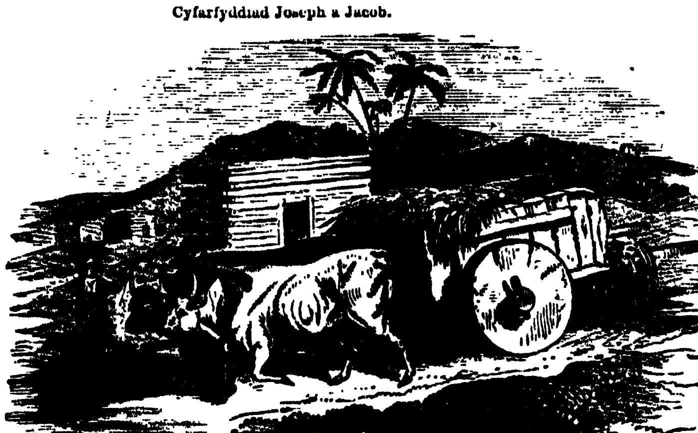
138.—Egyptians at Meat.—Gen. xliii 32.
Yr Aiphtiaid wrth eu pryd bwyd.



141.—Meeting of Joseph and Jacob.—Gen. xlvi. 29.
Cyfarfyddiad Joseph a Jacob.



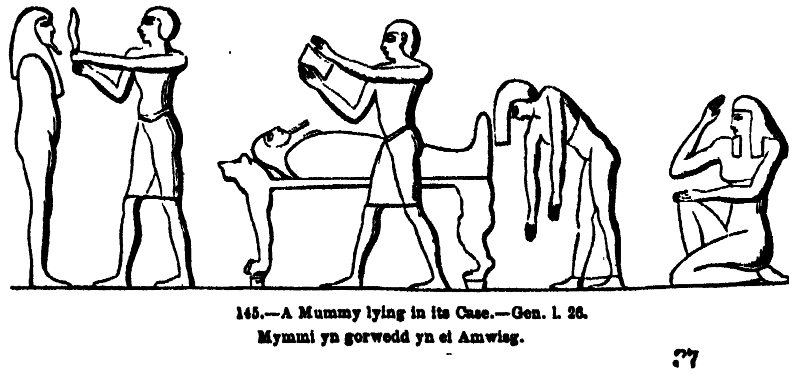
142.—Halt on a Journey.
Gorphwysiad ar Daith.



140.—Modern Syrian Carts of Ancient Form.—Gen. xlv. 19.
Cerbydau Syriaidd o Hen Ddull.



139.—Carts from Egyptian Sculptures.—Gen. xlv. 19.
Cerbydau oddi wrth Gerfiadau Aiphtaidd.



145.—A Mummy lying in its Case.—Gen. l. 26.
Mymmi yn gorwedd yn ei Amwisg.

steward of the household, from the secret intimations of Joseph; and at this they were much astonished, as the difference of age between many of them was too slight to be distinguishable in their persons. A mess for each was sent from the table before Joseph, and, according to Eastern custom, he distinguished Benjamin by sending five times as much to him as to the others. The manner in which the Egyptians sat at meat, by ones or twos, at small low tables, is pictured in the ancient tombs, and throws much light on this description.

Notwithstanding this apparent friendliness of their illustrious host, the sons of Jacob were by no means free from anxiety and alarm. They were, therefore, exceedingly glad when they found themselves safely on the road home the next day, laden with the desired corn, and their hostage Simeon having been restored to them. Their joy was of short duration; for they were soon overtaken by the well-known steward of Joseph's household, who roughly charged them with having stolen his master's silver cup—"the cup out of which my lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth." This last clause may require explanation. Jamblichus, in his book on 'Egyptian Mysteries,' mentions the practice of divining by cups; and that this superstition, together with many others, has survived from the most ancient times, is shown by a remarkable passage in Norden's Travels (vol. iii. p. 68). When this author, with his companions, had arrived at Dehr, the most remote extremity of Egypt, or rather in Nubia, where they were able to deliver themselves from a perilous situation by great presence of mind, they sent one of their company to a malicious and powerful Arab to threaten him. He answered, "I know what sort of people you are. I have consulted my cup, and found in it that you are from a people of whom one of our prophets has said—There will come Franks under every kind of pretence to spy out the land." The very same charge that was alleged against Jacob's sons.

The sons of Jacob felt themselves deeply wronged by such a charge, of which every one among them knew himself to be entirely innocent. They invited a search, and loudly consigned to death every one with whom the cup might be found, declaring that they also would then remain the slaves of Joseph. But the steward waived this excess of zeal, by declaring that only the actual thief should remain a bondman, and the rest should be blameless. The search then began. The sacks were opened in succession, beginning with that of the eldest, and not small was their triumph as sack after sack was opened without the missing property being found. But fearfully was their triumph checked when the steward produced the silver cup from the last of the sacks which he had examined—the sack of Benjamin. It had been placed there by the steward himself, on the order of his master.

Now came the trying point, by which Joseph was to know whether twenty-two years had passed over them in vain. He perhaps expected that they would abandon Benjamin to his fate, and hasten home. It was far otherwise. It is not clear whether they believed or not that Benjamin had stolen the cup. They probably believed it; and in that case their conduct appears the more entitled to admiration.

They thought of their father, and of his last words:—"If mischief befall him [Benjamin] by the way which ye go, then shall ye bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave." They rent their clothes in the anguish of their hearts, and, hastily relading their beasts, returned with their brother to the city.

On reaching Joseph's house, they fell on the ground before him, and, in answer to his stern rebuke, they repeated the proposal they had before made—that all should remain his bondmen; but they did not this time suggest that the actual criminal should die. But Joseph declared that this would be unjust: he would detain the culprit, but they were free to depart. This drew forward Judah, who had in an especial manner made himself responsible to his father for the safe return of Benjamin; and it was probably the confidence of Jacob in his strength of character, that drew from him the reluctant consent which he at length gave that Benjamin should share the perils of the journey. Never was the confidence of a father in the high qualities and the honour of a son more worthily bestowed. Judah stood forward, and, in a strain of the most powerful and touching eloquence, stated the case exactly as it stood with respect to his father and Benjamin, in a manner full of those natural touches and circumstances which go home to every heart, and which a heart so tenderly interested as that of Joseph could not possibly withstand. He concluded with imploring that Benjamin might be allowed to return, and that he, who had become the surety for him, might remain a bondman in his stead (Gen. xliv. 18—34). Overcome by the emotions which the speech of Judah had roused, Joseph could no longer support the part he had been acting. He wept aloud, and made himself known to them—"I am Joseph.—Doth my father yet live?" Perceiving the confusion which this announcement produced among them, he hastened to reassure them and to relieve their minds, by declaring his conviction that they, in following the impulses of their blind will, had been the unconscious instruments of accomplishing the purposes of God, whose providence had marked out for him the greatness to which he had attained, and the high duties which he had accomplished. He then proceeded to explain to them the length of time which the dearth was still to continue; and that the only course for them was to migrate to Egypt, where it would be in his power to provide every comfort and convenience for them during this terrible and trying season. He apprised them, however, that "every shepherd was an abomination to the Egyptians;" on which account he would procure a district called "the land of Goshen" to be assigned them, in which they might live apart, and follow their own pastoral modes of life. We have seen that foreigners, as such, were disliked by the Egyptians; and we may understand the further aversion, now intimated, to apply particularly to those foreigners who followed the pastoral mode of life, and whose aggressive character (as at present in the Bedouin Arabs) and unsettled habits rendered them odious to the Egyptians. That shepherds of every kind were despised by that people is shown by the fact that the artists of Upper and Lower Egypt vie with each other in caricaturing them whenever their figures are introduced in the pictured tombs. Joseph ended his explanation by embracing and weeping over his brother Benjamin without restraint. He kissed them all, and they then talked more calmly together.

It was gratifying to know that when the news transpired that Joseph's brethren had come, every one was pleased at a circumstance calculated to give him satisfaction. The king himself shared this pleasure, and, on receiving an explanation from Joseph, he expressed much kind interest in the welfare and preservation of the family, and directed that every facility should be given for their migration to Egypt and their settlement in Goshen.

Well supplied with provisions for the journey, and with cars in which the women and children might be the more conveniently removed, the brethren set out with lightened hearts for the land of Canaan. As they drew near the patriarchal camp, some of them hastened on to announce the glad tidings to their father. This they did somewhat abruptly:—"Joseph (said they) is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt!" The aged man could not readily believe this, and "his heart fainted within him." But they proceeded to explanations; and when he saw a confirmation of their marvellous story in the approach of the carriages, he could no longer disbelieve: his spirit revived, and he said, "It is enough—Joseph my son is yet alive—I will go and see him before I die."

Accordingly Jacob began his journey to Egypt, with all his family and all his possessions. On the way he paused at the old station of his family in Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to God upon the altar where his fathers had worshipped. In the following night, God appeared to him, and encouraged him in the important movement he was then making. He was assured that his family should in Egypt grow rapidly into a nation, and as a nation should go forth thence to take possession of the land of Canaan. Thus cheered, Jacob proceeded on his way to the land of Goshen, on the borders of which he was met by his long lost and late restored son, who had hastened in his chariot to meet him when apprised of his approach. Who shall describe the emotions of that great interview? The sacred historian does not attempt it. He simply tells us that Joseph "presented himself" (reverently) before his father, and then "he fell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while;" and so soon as strong feeling left vent for words, Israel said to Joseph, "Now, let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive!"

Not long after, Joseph introduced five of his brethren to the king. He doubtless selected those whose appearance he deemed likely to make a favourable impression upon Pharaoh. The king asked them about their occupation; and they answered, "Thy servants are shepherds, both we and also our fathers." The king then told Joseph to place them in the land of Goshen, or in any other part of Egypt that seemed best to him; adding, "And if thou knowest any men of activity among them, make them rulers over my cattle." Subsequently Jacob himself had an audience of the king, who, struck by his venerable appearance, asked him, "How old art thou?" And Jacob answered, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." The respect for honourable age was strong in Egypt: and it is observable that Jacob was granted a separate audience; that he omitted the usual formula of address, "thy servant;" and that, as became a man of his age, he "blessed Pharaoh" on quitting his presence.



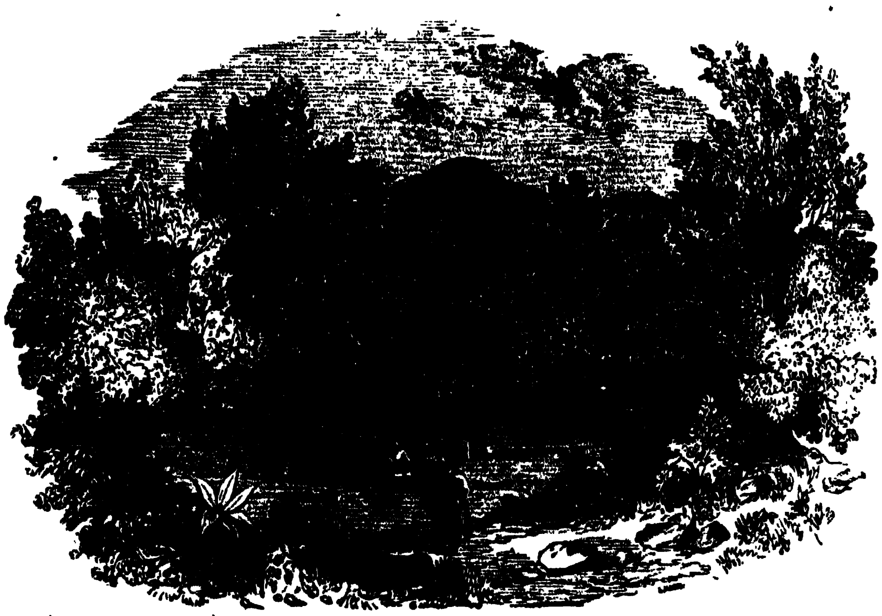
148.—John the Baptist. (Guido.)
Ioan F[illegible]



149.—John preaching in the Wilderness. (From a portion of a picture by Giotto.)
[illegible]n yn pregethu yn y Diffeithwch. (Rhan o ddarlun gan Giotto.)



150.—The Jordan leaving the Lake of Tiberias.
Yr Iorddonen yn gadael Llyn Tiberias.



151.—The River Jordan.
Yr Iorddonen.



152.—John preaching. (Stothard.)
Ioan yn pregethu.



153.—John baptizing Christ. (Rubens.)
Ioan yn bedyddio Crist.

SUNDAY V.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

JOHN, the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth, afterwards surnamed the Baptist, was to be both in his birth and ministry the Harbinger of Christ—the Preparer of his way—and hence the Evangelical record returns to him, as the time for the public appearance of Jesus as the Messiah approached.

As John grew up, he became strong in spirit, and every day manifested in him the endowments needful for the high mission to which he had, even before his birth, been appointed. In his native mountains, for he was of "the hill country of Judea," he gradually formed habits of life in accordance with his heaven-imposed condition of a Nazarite, and suitable to the austere character of his destined ministry. At length he assumed the camel's hair vesture and leathern cincture of a prophet, and withdrew into the rocky wildernesses near the Dead Sea and the Jordan, and dwelt apart, subsisting on rock-honey and on the locusts which are still in that country, counted as wholesome and nutritive food.

The precise date at which his ministry commenced is uncertain. The voice of God at length came to him, in the wilderness, and he commenced his mission by proclaiming the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. The appearance of the prophet of the wilderness, whose garb and manner reminded the people of Elias, in whose spirit and power he came, produced a strong sensation throughout the country. Multitudes of all classes and sects followed him, or resorted to him. He paused at Bethabara, one of the fords of the Jordan, and there baptized in that venerable stream such of his hearers as were duly impressed by what they heard from him. Many flocked to his preaching at Bethabara, to whom he gave exhortations suited to their condition and their faith. Some of these have been preserved by the Evangelists, and convey to us a clear impression of the important matter and the pointed and forcible style of his instructions. The burden of all his preaching was, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" and he constantly declared that his was the foretold Voice in the wilderness appointed to cry, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight" (Isa. xl. 3; Matt. iii. 3). Alarmed by the warnings and encouraged by the hopes which he held forth, the Jews were numerously baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. To the questions of the diverse classes of people who addressed him, the prophet replied by exhortations to charity and truth. The publicans, he warned against extortion; the soldiers in the pay of Herod Antipas, he warned against violence; and the formalists, the scribes, and Pharisees, he attacked with a severity which showed him in this also a precursor of Christ. "O generation of vipers," he cried, "who hath warned *you* to flee from the wrath to come? Think not to say unto yourselves, we have Abraham for our father (*i. e.* relying on that as an all-sufficient merit); for verily I say unto you, that God is able even out of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." This was a hard saying for them, especially from one who himself belonged to the priesthood.

All these things, and this new style of discourse, drew the most earnest attention towards the prophet. The ecclesiastical authorities at Jerusalem sent some of their own body to obtain clear information respecting his claims, and the character in which he appeared. They asked him if he was not himself the Christ so long expected; but, faithful to his trust, and humble in his highest glory, he readily admitted that he was not. Receiving similar answers to various other conjectures, they at length impatiently asked, "Who art thou? What sayest thou of thyself?" He gave his usual answer to such questions—"I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness," &c. They then asked on what ground he baptized, if he were not the Christ. To which he answered, "I, indeed, baptize with water unto repentance; but one mightier than I cometh, whose shoes (sandals) I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."

All this time that John was preaching the near approach of the Messiah, he remained in ignorance of his person. In all probability he was acquainted with Jesus, who was his near relation, but he knew not, he could scarcely suspect, that he was the Messiah: he however knew that in due time the Christ of God would be pointed out to him, in a manner not to be mistaken, and with this he was satisfied.

At length, among those who came to be baptized at Bethabara, was Jesus, who had hitherto lived and laboured with Joseph and Mary at Nazareth. John, having some presentiment of the truth, at first repelled him, saying, "*I* have need to be baptized of thee, and comest *thou* to *me*?" But Jesus persisted, and went down into the river, where he received baptism at the hands of John. As he came up out of the water, the sign expected by the Baptist to denote the Messiah was given. He saw the heavens open, and the Spirit of God descended like a dove, and rested upon Jesus, while a Voice was heard declaring, "*This* is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." From that time John bore witness that Jesus was that Son of God, whom he had formerly in more general terms proclaimed.

From Mark i. 25, we learn that it was immediately after his baptism and public recognition as the Messiah, that Jesus withdrew into the wilderness, where he remained for forty days without food. It was usual for those who entered upon the prophetical office to prepare themselves for its important duties by fasting and prayer,—by prayer so earnest and long continued that they sometimes neglected to take food, and this seems to have been the case with Jesus. At the end of the forty days, Satan was permitted to subject his virtue and high purposes to such a trial of proof as might suitably introduce him to his public ministry. The particulars of this Temptation are recorded, with some slight variations, in the fourth chapter of Matthew and the fourth of Luke. Jesus was hungry, and Satan tempted him to obtain food by an unwarranted exercise of the miraculous powers which belonged to him. Failing in this, he placed him in danger on the highest point of the temple, and urged him to cast himself down, in the assurance that the angels would bear him harmless up, if he were indeed the Son of God. Foiled also in this, Satan transported him to the top of a high mountain, and promised him, in exchange for his homage, dominion over the wide lands which he surveyed; but receiving a signal and final rebuff, he departed, leaving Jesus still in the mountainous wilderness beyond the Jordan.

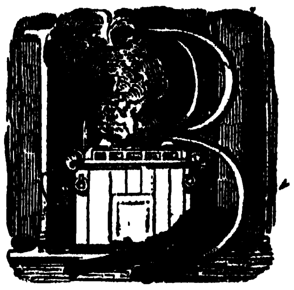
Returning from thence towards Galilee, Jesus had to cross the Jordan at the ford of Bethabara, where John was still baptizing, and made some pause in the neighbourhood. He was probably present at the interview already mentioned between John and the commission from Jerusalem; for John said then, "There is one *standing among you* whom ye know not: he it is who, coming after me, is preferred before me." At all events, it was the very day after that interview, that John, seeing Jesus coming towards him, publicly pointed him out as the Messiah to all who were then present, in the emphatic words, "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. *This is he of whom I said*, After me cometh a man who is preferred before me." The next day John again pointed out Jesus as "the Lamb of God," when he observed him walking by. Two of John's own disciples who heard this then went and followed Jesus. One of these was John and the other Andrew, both of them fishermen of the lake of Tiberias. Jesus, observing that they were following his steps, turned and asked, "What seek ye?" Which they answered by another question, indicative of their desire to attach themselves to him, and to know him better—"Master, where dwellest thou?" He courteously answered, "Come and see." They accordingly attended him to the place where he lodged, and remained with him the rest of that day, which was then near its close.

Andrew, after quitting Jesus for the day, rested not till he had found his brother Simon, to whom he imparted the glad tidings—"We have found the Messias!" and the next day he took him to Jesus. On his approach, and before he had been announced, Jesus saluted him with "Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas!" This word means 'a stone,' and is accordingly rendered in Greek by PETER, which has the same meaning. It was not unusual in those times for chiefs, masters, and teachers, to impose new and significant names, after this manner, upon those who became their servants or disciples (John i. 41, 42).

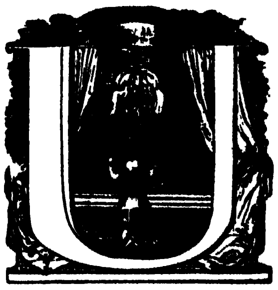
The next day Jesus proceeded into Galilee on his return to Nazareth, and on the way met with Philip of Bethsaida, and said to him, "Follow me." Philip was of the same town as Andrew and Peter, and, having been probably apprised by them that Jesus was the Messiah, he unhesitatingly obeyed the call. This was the first case in which Christ employed this form of summon, which he used in making choice of those whom he intended inseparably to follow him as his disciples.



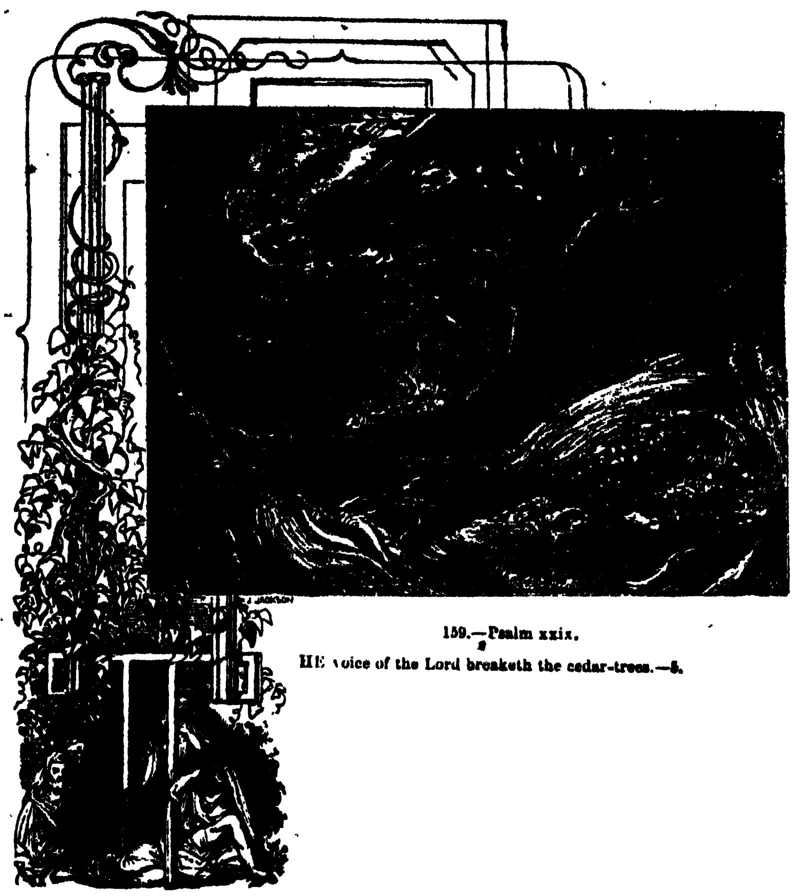
154.—Psalm xxv.



155.—Psalm xxvi.



157.—Psalm xxviii.

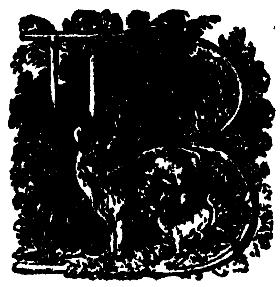


159.—Psalm xxix.

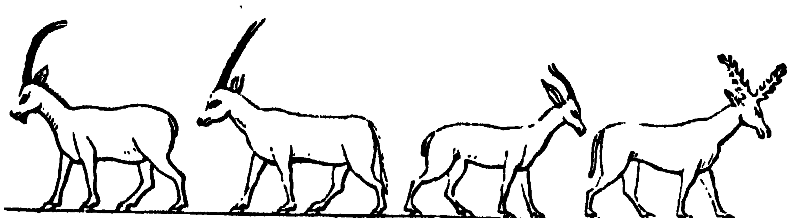
HE voice of the Lord breaketh the cedar-trees.—5.



156.—Psalm xxvii.



158.—Psalm xxix.

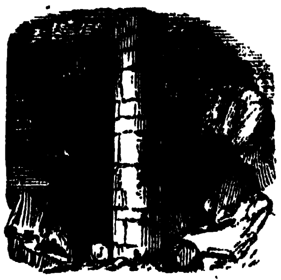


Ibex.	Oryx	Gazelle.	Stag.
Alpafr.	Orics.	Gafrewig.	Hydd.

166.—Animals from Egyptian Sculpture.
Anifeiliaid o Gerfiad Aiphtaidd.



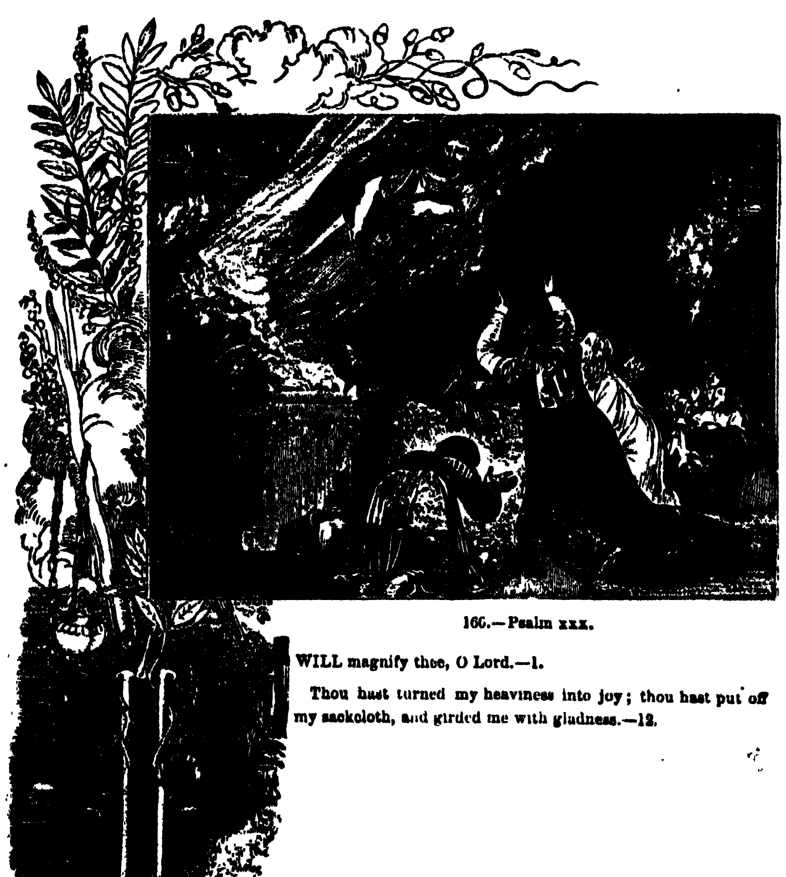
165.—Oryx leucoryx.



161.—Psalm xxxi.



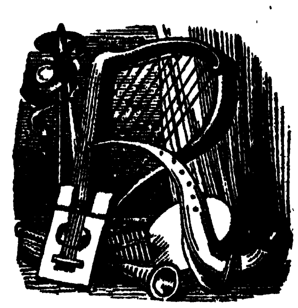
162.—Psalm xxxii.



160.—Psalm xxx.

WILL magnify thee, O Lord.—1.

Thou hast turned my heaviness into joy; thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness.—12.



163.—Psalm xxxiii.



164.—Psalm xxxiv.

SUNDAY VI.—THE PSALMS.

HEBREW LYRICAL POETRY.

ONE is not to suppose that a master like David was without companions and assistants in the poetic art. Several of these are indeed mentioned in the title of some of the Psalms, although the authority which ascribes to them the authorship of these Psalms is much open to question. David's own son, Solomon, is testified to have united to the sententious style peculiar to him, such richness of lyric invention, that in his time lyric poetry must have stood at a high point of perfection—we say stood, for it must be admitted to be doubtful whether it ever attained a *higher* degree of perfection than it reached in the time of David. However, Solomon not only "spake three thousand proverbs," but his songs were "a thousand and five" (1 Kings iv. 32). It is remarkable, and much to be regretted, that, with the exception of two, the ascription of which to him has little authority, no Psalms of Solomon are preserved in the collection which has descended to us. Nor do we find in that collection any Psalm with the author's name, belonging to the period after Solomon; not even one which admits of being referred with certainty and of necessity to any particular event in the history of those times. And yet it is very certain, from such lyric poems as the song of Hezekiah (Isa. xxxviii. 10—20) and the prophecy of Habakkuk, that during this period the culture of lyric poetry had by no means fallen into neglect. Indeed there are many of the Psalms in the present collection which, by all but universal consent, must be ascribed to the Captivity and the immediately succeeding period: and these Psalms are admitted to rank with the finest in the collection, and exhibit a purity of language, a sublimity, beauty, and freshness of conception by no means inferior to what we find in the poems of David and his contemporaries. Psalms xlv., lxxiv., lxxix., cvii., and many, if not all, of the Psalms of Degrees, may be pointed out in proof of this statement.

This, at the first view, seems to present a singular phenomenon. In the words of De Wette (to whom, with some necessary modification of his general views, we are much indebted in this branch of our subject), "The lyric poetry of the Hebrews, which was cultivated and brought to perfection in the times of David, after producing abundant fruit, sank into a repose of nearly five hundred years; and then, all at once, in the most calamitous period of the state, arose again another golden age, and yielded a second harvest—a phenomenon hardly corresponding with the common course of events. The singularity, however, disappears as soon as we suppose that the collection of Psalms contains several pieces, either anonymous or incorrectly named, which belong to the period extending from David to the Captivity. Indeed it is in the highest degree probable that lyric composition flourished side by side with the prophetic poetry, and that many of the prophets themselves contributed to the present collection, and might reclaim their productions from David and others. In the Septuagint some of the prophets are actually named as authors of the Psalms" (*Commentar über die Psalmen*).

PSALMS XXV.—XXXIV.

THE REEM OR "UNICORN."—In the Psalms there are repeated allusions to this animal, which has been the subject of no small amount of speculation and conjecture. In xxix. 6, we have—"He maketh them (the cedars) to skip like a calf; Lebanon also and Sirion like a young (*reem* or) unicorn:" in xxii. 21, "Thou hast heard me also from among the horns of the (*reems* or) unicorns." From this it is certain that the reem *was* a horned animal; and from xcii. 10, we learn that the horn was lofty: "My horn shalt thou exalt, like the horn of the (*reem* or) unicorn." This poetical use of the singular for the plural appears to have originated the notion that the Hebrew *reem* was the same with the fabulous unicorn. But it is evident that the Hebrew writers did not even intend to ascribe one horn to the reem, for in Deut. xxxiii. 17, we read, "His horns are like the horns of a reem," where "the *horns* of a *unicorn*" (which means *one*-horned) would be absurd. Indeed no passage could be more conclusive than this, as the reference is to Joseph, whose two sons Ephraim and Manasseh, or rather the two tribes descended from them, are figuratively "the horns" compared to the horns of the reem.

As we are thus exonerated from the necessity of finding a one-horned animal to suit the Hebrew reem, we may with the more advantage read the highly-coloured and truly poetical description of the animal which is given in the book of Job (xxxix. 9—12).—

"Will the reem submit to serve thee;
Will he go to rest at thy stall;
Canst thou make the harness bind him in thy furrow;
Will he plough up the valleys after thee?
Wilt thou rely upon him because his strength is great;
Wilt thou leave thy labours to him?
Wilt thou trust him to carry out thy seed
And to bring home thy threshed grain?"

Here the horn is not mentioned, and the attention is chiefly directed to the wildness of the animal, its swiftness, and strength.

The notion which has seemed in most translations to give the sanction of Holy Scripture to a known fable appears to have originated with the Septuagint, which renders the Hebrew word by *Monoceros* (μονοκερος), whence the Latin *Unicornis*, and thence the English *Unicorn*.

There has been a very general disposition to identify the reem of Scripture with the rhinoceros, and obviously on the ground that this is the only animal that has a single horn, which, as we have seen, is by no means required for the Hebrew reem. Pennant, proceeding on this ground, is very confident that the Indian rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros Indicus*) is "the unicorn" of Scripture, chiefly, as it appears, because this species has but one horn, whereas that of Africa has two. But since his time an African species has been found with a horn much longer, and more tapering, shapely, and erect than that of the Asiatic species, and much resembling that which is popularly ascribed to the unicorn. This species is called the *Rhinoceros simus*, and belongs to Southern Africa. The species has become very rare. A head was brought to this country by the Rev. John Campbell, the missionary, and the whole animal has since been described and figured with great exactness by Dr. Smith.

There seems, however, an insuperable objection to identifying any rhinoceros with the Scriptural *reem*, whether the fables of the unicorn did or did not originate with that animal. It is very certain that the rhinoceros does not, and never did, within historical memory, inhabit Western Asia, and could not be known to the Scriptural writers so familiarly as the reem evidently was. Sensible of this, some writers have proposed to substitute the buffalo, which is certainly known in Western Asia. But this animal, so far from possessing the untameable wildness ascribed to the reem, is, and has been immemorially, domesticated in all the countries where it is known, and trained to the very labours for which the book of Job describes the reem as unfit.

The reem was manifestly a wild animal, and, of all the wild animals known in the Biblical region, it is difficult to fix on any with so much of confidence and probability as on the *Oryx leucoryx*, commonly called the wild ox, but very erroneously, seeing that it belongs not to the bovine, but to the antilopine family of animals. This animal is still found in the wilder regions of Syria and Arabia; and that it was so anciently, and was a favourite object of the chace, is shown by the paintings in the Egyptian tombs. It is, for one of this genus, a large and powerful animal, exceedingly swift in flight, and of an unusually vicious and savage nature, and seems to answer all the conditions required by the Hebrew reem. It may recommend this explanation that, although we cannot allow that the reem of Scripture has any necessary connection with the notions about unicorns, it is highly probable that these notions were founded upon this very animal, which we are disposed to identify with the Hebrew reem: and, if so, it is easily to be understood how the Seventy came to translate the word by *monoceros*, in which translation all the discussion about Biblical unicorns has originated. A slight view of the figure of the oryx will indicate a striking resemblance to the fabled unicorn. From the form of its head, and the manner in which the horns spring close to each other from the middle of the forehead, it is clear that if one of the horns were broken off near the root, and the fracture covered by the white hair which grows around it, most unscientific observers would suppose that they beheld an animal naturally one-horned. It is indeed a curious fact that this animal is usually so figured as to show but one horn in the Egyptian monuments, but it is not agreed whether these figures intend to represent the animal as from accident or design one-horned, or that the artist merely proposed to intimate that the further horn was concealed by the nearer in the profile view of the animal.

In speaking of its wildness, we must be understood with some limitation; for although the strength of the animal could not be subdued to any useful service, it was so far tamed by the Egyptians that large numbers of them were kept in the preserves of their villas.

SUNDAY VI.—BIBLE HISTORY.

NOW the seven years of famine were succeeded by many years of great and compensating plenty; but the position of Joseph does not appear to have been in anywise affected by the cessation of the special services for which power had been given to him. There is no intimation that down to the time of his death his influence in the government of Egypt had been in any respect impaired.

About seventeen years after the family of Israel had been settled in Goshen, the news of his father's illness induced Joseph to hasten thither with his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim. The dying patriarch raised himself up in his bed to receive his ever best beloved son. After mutual endearments, Jacob related to his son the promises of God, from which he gathered the assured conviction that his posterity was to become a great nation, destined not to remain in Egypt, but to inherit the land promised to him and to his fathers. This, while it reminded Jacob of the true position of his family in Egypt—that of sojourners, and not settlers—enhanced the value of his declared intention to adopt the two sons of Joseph as his own children, thereby to give to him a double share through them in the heritage. The eye-sight of Jacob had failed from very age—but he became aware that others were present, and being told by Joseph "They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place," he desired them to be brought near to him. He kissed and embraced them with all the tenderness of one who beheld in them fresh memorials of that dear Rachel, whose presence to his aged mind even in these final moments is touchingly evinced by the words which had just before fallen from him, without any apparent connection with the subject, save that which existed in the depths of his own heart:—"As for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the way . . . and I buried her there, in the way to Ephrath."

Having intimated his intention to bestow on his grandsons the blessing to which so much importance was in those times attached, Joseph placed them before him, properly, as he thought—the eldest, Manasseh, being placed opposite his right hand: but Jacob, blind as he was, crossed his hands so as to place his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, the youngest; and when Joseph, supposing this a mistake, attempted to alter this position of his hands, remarking that the other was the eldest, Jacob persisted, saying, "I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall become great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he." His blessing was given accordingly, and how remarkably its purport was accomplished in the relative destinies of the tribes which sprang from Ephraim and Manasseh will appear hereafter.

After this Jacob's other sons, who had been summoned to the bed-side of the dying patriarch, also arrived, and he bestowed upon them blessings significantly and distinctively applicable to each of them, and to the tribes which should spring from them. The final scene of his eventful life cannot be related in other words than those of the sacred historian:—"And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people. And Joseph fell upon his face, and wept upon him, and kissed him."

Jacob was aged one hundred and forty-seven years at the time of his death in the year 1689 B.C.

The death of the father of so great a man as Joseph could not pass without much note in Egypt; and the circumstances indicated are in the most exact conformity with the usages of that country as described by ancient historians and represented on ancient monuments. The body of Jacob received the embalmment of a prince, as we know from the fact that forty days were taken up by the different processes. These forty days, and the thirty days following, together seventy days, the Egyptians observed as days of public mourning, which also indicates that the ceremonies were scarcely less than those which attended the death of royal personages; for we are told that "When a king died, all the Egyptians raised a general lamentation, tore their garments, closed the temples, offered no sacrifices, celebrated no festivals, for seventy-two days" (Herodotus, ii. 86).

Jacob had strictly enjoined Joseph to deposit his remains in the family sepulchre near Hebron, in the land which his descendants were to possess. Thither it was therefore conveyed in great state, being attended not only by the family of the patriarch, but by a large body of Egyptians with chariots and horses: and their presence and numbers gave a character so much Egyptian to the proceeding, that when the party paused in "the threshing-floor of Atad" to celebrate a final mourning of seven days before consigning the body to the sepulchre, the neighbouring inhabitants remarked, "This is a great mourning for the Egyptians;" whence the place received the name of ABEL-MITZRAIM, "the mourning of the Egyptians." Joseph himself outlived his father about fifty-four years, and died (1635 B.C.) at the age of one hundred and ten years. Before his death, he called his brethren around him, and after expressing his firm conviction that their descendants would eventually be removed from Egypt to their promised possession, he took a solemn oath from them, that when that time came, they would take away his bones with them, and not leave them behind in Egypt. After death, the corpse of Joseph was embalmed, and deposited in one of those coffins or mummy-cases which the recent spoliations of Egyptian sepulchres have in this day made familiar to us.

The generation to which these events belong died out: and still the Hebrews remained in Goshen, where they increased with astonishing rapidity, and followed their old pastoral modes of life, without altogether neglecting agriculture.

In the course of time, apparently about thirty-eight years after the death of Joseph, a new dynasty, probably from Upper Egypt, obtained possession of the throne of Lower Egypt, which we are to regard as the Egypt of the patriarchal history. To the new dynasty the services of Joseph, and the circumstances attending the introduction of his family, could not be altogether unknown. But they were not recognised, not appreciated, not understood, with that fulness of apprehension which would belong to those who were descended from and connected with the kings and princes who were Joseph's contemporaries. But the phenomenon of a people so different in character, habits, and religion, as the Hebrews, residing within a frontier much exposed to aggression from tribes of similar habits to theirs, and with whom they might be supposed to have a common sympathy and interest—drew the attention and excited the fears of the new government. It was apprehended, in the words of the new king, "that when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us" (Exod. i. 10). These words were spoken perfectly in accordance with the state of things in Egypt. Fruitful and cultivated Egypt has for its natural enemies the inhabitants of the neighbouring deserts, and it is never in greater peril than when these enemies find allies among its own inhabitants.

It was therefore determined to adopt a repressive policy towards the Israelites, with a view of checking their alarmingly rapid increase, and to break their spirit of independence. Hard and constant labour was judged the means best suited to this end: and they were therefore, in fact, enslaved, and compelled to labour on the public works. In that part of Egypt buildings are and were for the most part constructed of bricks made of clay compacted with straw, and dried in the sun. There are even some pyramids built with this material. This explains how it was that the Egyptians are said to have "made the life of the Israelites bitter with hard bondage *in mortar and in brick*;"—nothing is said of stone. For the further illustration of this it may be remarked that bricks were in Egypt made under the direction of the government, or of some person privileged by the crown, as appears by the stamp which is still found upon many of them. A great multitude of strangers were constantly employed in the brick-fields of Egypt, this being one of the servile employments, in which the native Egyptians were too proud to labour; or, in other words, the great number of slaves and captives made all unskilled labour too cheap to afford a rate of wages which *they* deemed adequate. We are not informed what works the Israelites constructed, excepting that "they built for Pharaoh treasure-cities, Pithom and Raamses." The latter, and probably the other, was in the land of Goshen, and they appear to have been fortified towns, erected in the land of the Hebrews for the purpose of keeping them in subjection, and of storing the proportions of their pastoral or agricultural produce which the Egyptian government required from them.

These rigid measures by no means answered the desired object. The more the Israelites were oppressed, "the more they multiplied and grew." The atrocious plan was then devised of destroying, through the midwives, all the male children of the Hebrews in the birth; but this plan of secret massacre having been frustrated by



168.—Brick Pyramid of Faioum.—Exod. i.
Pigdwr Priddfaen Ffaioum.



169.—View on the River Nile.
Golygfa ar yr Afon Nilus.



167.—Jacob blessing the Sons of Joseph. (Rembrandt.)
Jacob yn bendithio Meibion Joseph.



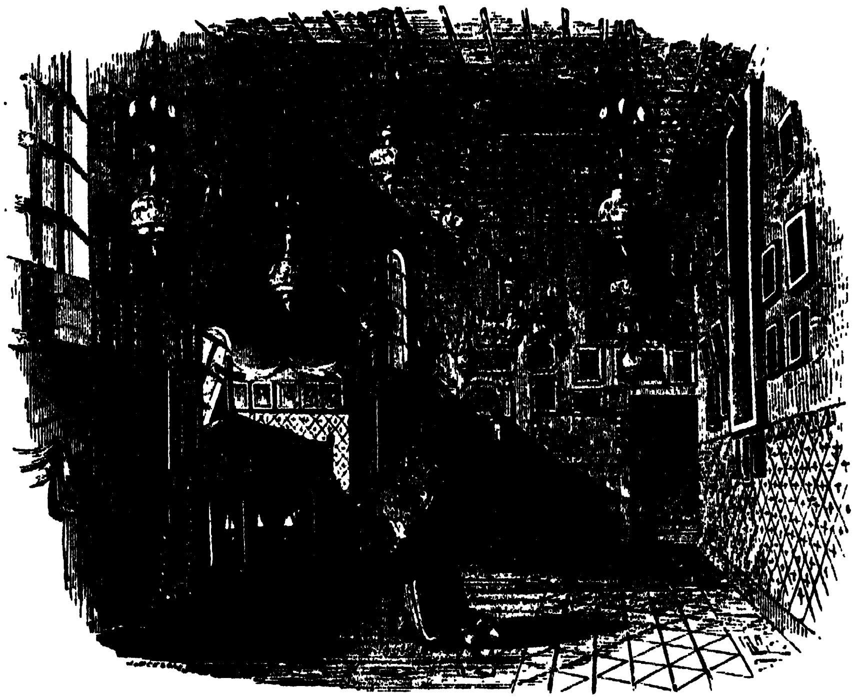
170.—Finding of Moses. (Vandyke.)—Exod. ii.
Canfod Moses.



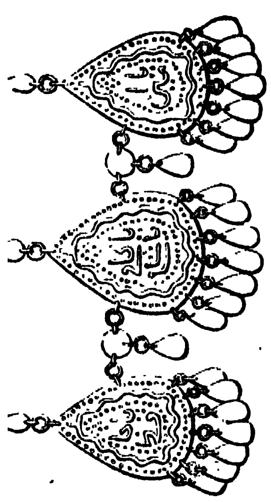
171.—Moses and the Egyptian.
Moses a'r Aipht[illegible].



173.—Mounts Sinai and Horeb, with the Convent of St. Catherine, from the North.—Exod. iii.
Mynyddoedd Sinai a Horeb, a Mynachlog St. Catherine, o'r tu Gogledd.



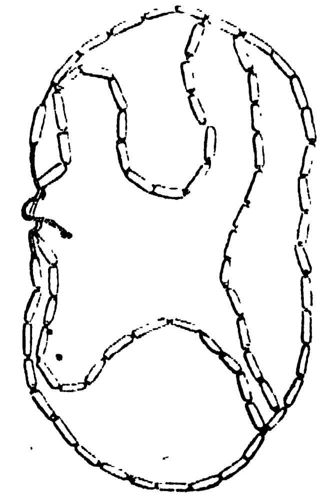
172.—Chapel of the Burning Bush.
Capel y Berth Losgedig.



175.—The Ckumarah.



174.—Ascent to Mount Sinai, from the 'Voyage en Arabie Pétrée,' par MM. Leon et Laborde.
Esgynfa Mynydd Sinai, o 'Daith yn Arabia Garegog,' gan y Meistri Leon a Laborde.



176.—Egyptian Necklace.
Gyddfdorch Aiphtaidd.



177.—Ornaments of Egyptian Females. "Jewels of gold and jewels of silver."
Addurniadau Benywaidd Aiphtaidd. "Tlysau aur a thlysau arian."



178.—Egyptian Bastinado.
Pastyniad Aiphtaidd.

the reluctance of the midwives to be parties in it, the king no longer hesitated to issue a public order that every male child thenceforth born to the Hebrews should be cast into the river.

In those days, the wife of a man named Amram, descended from Levi, gave birth to a son, whose singularly engaging and comely appearance urged her maternal heart to risk the penalties of disobedience by concealing its existence. Three months she hid her child, when, finding it no longer possible to keep it concealed, and knowing that if found it would certainly be destroyed, she resolved to give it one only chance for life, by committing it to the naked Providence of God. To this end she prepared a kind of basket, made of the papyrus reed, and daubed over with bitumen to render it impervious to the water. In this she placed the child, and laid it among the rushes that grew upon the bank of the Nile. A grown up sister, Miriam, stood watching in the distance to observe what might befal. She had not stood long when, behold, the daughter of the king came forth attended by her maidens to bathe in the river. This fact implies, what we know from other sources, that the women of ancient Egypt were less restrained than those of the modern East; and the fact of the princess bathing in the river is explained from the peculiar sacredness of the Nile in the view of the Egyptians. As the princess walked beside the stream, the ark in which lay the Hebrew infant attracted her notice, and she sent one of her maidens to bring it to her. When the ark was opened, the babe wept, and his tears and beauty together touched the womanly heart of the king's daughter. She was moved with compassion. "This," she said, "is one of the Hebrews' children;" clearly discerning the cause of this exposure. By this time the child's sister had approached, and hearing this, she interposed the suggestive and well-put question, "Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?" On receiving the thrilling answer, "Go," the girl flew and fetched the child's own mother. Ah, who can tell the blessedness of that mother, the fulness of her heart, as she received back her babe from the king's daughter, with the charge, "Take this child, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages?"

The child thus marvellously, for marvellous purposes, preserved, received from the princess the name of MOSES (*from the water*) in commemoration of her taking him from the river.

When the days of his nursing had passed, the boy was taken to the princess, and remained with her. She adopted him for her son, and he was brought up as the son of the king's daughter. We may be sure that as such he received the highest education which the most educated nation in the world could give. We are, indeed, expressly told that he was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts vii. 22). We are also informed that he was "mighty in word and in deeds." What these deeds were we do not know, but the Jews believe that he was, on more than one occasion, intrusted with the command of the Egyptian armies, and gained great victories over the enemies of Egypt.

He, however, was aware of his origin, and acquainted with his own family. He knew the destinies of Israel, and a part with them seemed to him more desirable than the glories of Egypt. We are told that "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Heb. xi. 24, 25). But whether this refers to something which occurred before that visit to his brethren in Goshen which the regular narrative records, or is deduced from the consequences of that visit, we have no means of knowing. At all events, when he was forty years old (1531 B.C.) Moses paid this visit, and examined, with that largeness of view which belonged to him, the condition of his people. They seemed to have remained in the same enslaved condition in which they had been left by the first decree of the Egyptian king, but the edict respecting the destruction of the male children had not continued long in operation, having been withdrawn probably at the solicitation of the princess.

Moses was much grieved and exasperated at the condition to which he beheld the descendants of Abraham reduced; and when on one occasion he saw an Egyptian smiting an Israelite, his indignation was so highly kindled that he slew the oppressor and afterwards hid the body in the sand. This he did, doubtless, to save the Israelites, to whom the act would not fail to be attributed, from the consequences. The next day Moses had one, among other, of those opportunities of perceiving how the iron of the Egyptian bondage had eaten into the soul of his countrymen, which probably occasioned his reluctance, at a future day, to undertake the task of their deliverance. One object of the tyranny to which they were subject had been fulfilled. Their spirit was broken, their souls had fallen into bondage; and there was nothing they so much dreaded as the displeasure of their tyrants, and they regarded with apprehension and dislike any person or any act, however generous in character or noble in motive, that seemed likely to draw upon them the unfavourable notice of their taskmasters. Perceiving two Israelites struggling with each other, he said to the one who was apparently in the wrong, "Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?" To which the other replied tauntingly, "Who made *thee* a prince and a judge over us? Intendest thou to kill me as thou killedst the Egyptian?" It thus appeared that his act was known, and known to persons not favourably disposed towards him. The severity of the Egyptian laws in such cases left him no choice but flight. That flight was his only choice may seem to imply that in fact he had by this time lost or given up his station at the Egyptian court; but when we recollect that his act evinced a sympathy with the bondaged Hebrews, which the court would regard as dangerous in proportion to the rank and station of the person by whom it was manifested, we cannot be sure that this was not in itself the act of abandonment to which the apostle refers.

He fled, and his course was directed towards that region which was in after-years the scene of his glory. He made his way to the country bordering on the eastern arm of the Red Sea, which was anciently called the Ælanitic Gulf, and now the Gulf of Akaba. Arrived in the land of southern Midian, the exile rested beside a well, and while he sat there the daughters of the emir and priest of Midian, Jethro by name, arrived to water their father's flock. They had drawn up the water and filled the troughs, when some shepherds came and drove them off. These churlish shepherds were proceeding to give to their flocks the water which had been drawn, when Moses interposed, and himself watered the maidens' flock. They failed not to report this kindness of "the Egyptian," as Moses appeared in their eyes, to their father Jethro, who sent to offer him the hospitalities of his house. In the end Moses consented to remain with Jethro, and take the charge of his flocks; and ere long he obtained in marriage one of Jethro's daughters, named Zipporah, by whom he had two sons: one of them he called GERSHOM (*a stranger here*), "because I have been a stranger in a strange land;" and the other ELIEZER (*God's-help*), "because the God of my father was my help and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh."

Thus Moses, who had been in Egypt regarded as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, became a keeper of sheep, which, in the arid season, when the plains are parched with drought, he often led to feed in the green valleys of Sinai.

Forty years after he had quitted Egypt, and when he was eighty years of age, he led his flock, as usual, into these favourite pastures, when one day he was much astonished to perceive a bush burning in the distance without being consumed. He drew near to see this great sight, when a miraculous voice from out the bush charged him to unloose the sandals from his feet—the Oriental mark of respect—because the ground on which he stood was holy. By this Moses might have guessed that he stood in the presence of that God who had so often appeared to his patriarchal fathers; for only the presence of God could, in the sense intimated, render the ground holy. On this point he could not be long in doubt, for the Voice said:—"I am the God of thy father: the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And when Moses heard that, he hid his face, "for he was afraid to look upon God," or even upon the burning symbol of his glory. The divine Voice then proceeded to declare the object of this appearance. God had seen the grievous and still continued oppression of his people in Egypt, and the time for their deliverance was come. And they were to be delivered, and conducted to their promised heritage, not by the naked arm of God, but by that arm clothed with visible agencies, and acting through human instruments—a human deliverer. And who was he? Moses himself was called to the glorious task of bringing forth the people of God from the house of bondage, and he was encouraged to this undertaking by the assurance that all his personal enemies, all those who once sought his life in Egypt were now dead, so that he might safely return thither. That the time was come for Israel to be delivered was matter of great joy to Moses; but time—forty years of pastoral occupation—had subdued the early ardour of him who had once been a self-appointed redresser of Israel's wrongs, and had been prematurely anxious to assume the task of a deliverer (Acts vii. 20). The repulse which he then received sunk deep into his soul, and made him hopeless of rousing the spirit of a people so accustomed to their yoke, so enslaved in heart, as he knew them to be. But the Divine Being condescended to answer his objections, and reminded him that, in discharging the great duty to which he was now called, he would act with power beyond his own.

SUNDAY VI.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

ANDREW and Peter, although they had in a certain sense attached themselves to our Lord, had not yet been called in that peculiar manner which required them to be in constant attendance upon his person: it is, therefore, to Philip that we may assign the honour of being the first "called" disciple of Christ. In this, as in the former case, the discovery of the Christ so long expected, and so earnestly desired, was a matter of too high interest and importance, a secret too exciting, to be hidden by those to whom it was imparted. Accordingly, no sooner did Philip meet with an old acquaintance called Nathaniel than he cried out, "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nazareth, being a mean place, and the inhabitants of indifferent character, was despised even among the Galileans, who were themselves contemned by the people of Judea. Knowing this, and being aware that the Christ was expected to come from Bethlehem, Nathaniel caught at the word Nazareth, and asked, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip gave the best possible answer, "Come and see." They accordingly went to Jesus, who no sooner saw Nathaniel approach than he said, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Surprised beyond measure at this recognition, Nathaniel asked, "Whence knowest thou me?" Jesus answered, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee." It was not unusual for educated men among the Jews to study the law under fig trees, and sometimes, although more rarely, to pray there. This may indicate the act which Jesus had in view. This answer implied our Lord's cognizance of the private conversation between Philip and himself, and also of acts performed by him in the secrecy of his own house or garden. Overcome by this, he at once burst out into the free and full confession—"Rabbi, *thou* art the Son of God, *thou* art the King of Israel!" This gave occasion for what may be regarded as the first prophecy of our Saviour, "Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these. Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." Many think from this that Nathaniel had been studying under the fig-tree Jacob's vision at Bethel, of the ladder reaching unto heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending thereon; and that Christ designed to strengthen his conviction by disclosing his knowledge of this fact. But this is what we cannot know. (John i. 43—51.)

Jesus had scarcely arrived at Nazareth when he was called with his disciples to a marriage-feast at Cana, to which his mother had, it seems, already gone; we find him there on the third day after leaving Bethabara. That Joseph was not also present, has led to the notion that he was already dead; and this is more than probable, as he is not once mentioned as living, nor does he on any occasion appear throughout the period of our Lord's ministry. Cana was a small place about five miles to the north of Nazareth, and was called Cana of Galilee, to distinguish it from another place of the same name. The persons then married are supposed by some to have been relations to Mary. It is shown to be probable that her sister, the wife of Cleophas, lived at Cana, and had a grown-up family in which this marriage may have taken place: and the somewhat prominent part taken by Mary in giving general orders to the attendants has been cited in support of this conjecture. Among the Jews a wedding-feast lasted seven days; and it would seem that Christ and his disciples arrived in some of the latter days. The wine then began to run short, probably from the arrival of more guests than had been expected. The presence of Jesus, for instance, could not have been provided for, as it could not be known that he would return in time to be present, or that he would return with several persons in his company. At such feasts the guests were composed of two sorts of persons—those who came by special invitation, and those who went of their own accord, but were expected to make a present to the bridegroom and the bride. A lack of wine towards the end of a feast might therefore very naturally arise under the most careful provision; and that this happened at the marriage in Cana by no means implies, as usually stated, that the persons then married were in humble circumstances.

The attention of Jesus was drawn to this want of wine by his mother. The intent with which she did this has been much disputed. That she expected he would remove it by a miraculous supply is the general interpretation, and is the one which seems to agree best with all the circumstances. Jesus, however, answered, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come." The *form* of this answer was, among the Jews, anything but disrespectful: but the sense implies a gentle reprehension of any dictation to him in that capacity in which he was above all human control, adding that the time for this manifestation of his miraculous powers was not fully come. Gathering from this that the want would eventually be supplied in the way she expected, Mary instructed the attendants to pay exact attention to whatever instructions they might receive from him.

There were on the premises six of those large stone jars or waterpots in which the Jews in those parts kept their water for use, which had been brought in smaller vessels from the well or fountain. They were preferred because they kept the water cool in summer, and it is a remarkable fact that such jars of ancient date are at this day found in the neighbourhood of Cana. These waterpots Jesus secretly instructed the servants to fill with water; and they filled them to the very brim.

It was usual among the Jews and other ancient nations, at all their larger entertainments, to appoint one person as a master of the feast (Architriclinus), to preserve order and to keep up good and cheerful feeling. Among the Jews, a priest was usually chosen for this purpose, as the influence of his character enabled him the more easily to keep the festivities within the bounds of sobriety and prudence, while his acquaintance with the law afforded some security against ceremonial transgression. There was accordingly a master to this marriage-feast in Cana.

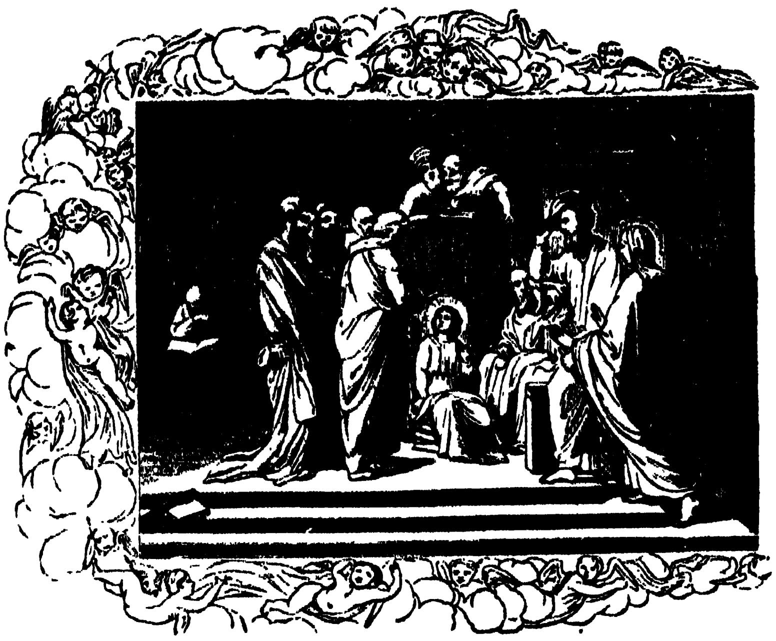
Jesus now directed the servants to fill their goblets from the jars which had been filled with water, and submit them to the governor of the feast. They did so, and he, unknowing whence the beverage came, pleasantly animadverted upon the impropriety of which the bridegroom had been guilty in holding back the best wine till the end of the feast. It was the custom of the Jews to give the best wine at the beginning of a feast, and afterwards, when the taste became blunted, an inferior sort. "But thou," said the master of the feast to the bridegroom—"thou hast kept the good wine until now."

This was the first miracle of Christ; and it appears to have had a specific significance, in drawing attention at the outset to the difference between the austerities of John the Baptist's ministry and the amenities of his own.

Not long after this the approach of the Passover rendered it necessary that Christ should go to Jerusalem, there to celebrate the feast, as the law required. The incidents of the journey are not related. But on his arrival, Jesus commenced his public ministry at Jerusalem by expelling the money-changers, and the dealers, who at that season were wont to establish themselves in a certain part of the temple's outer court. It was not a common market; but was temporarily held for the use of those who resorted to the temple in great numbers at this feast. Such animals were there sold as were required for sacrifices—oxen, sheep, lambs, and also doves; and there were tables, where the money-changers gave Jewish money for the current Roman coins, it being held unlawful to pay the temple tribute of half a shekel with heathen money. This offended Jesus, who provided himself with a scourge of small cords, and by the severity of his countenance and of his words, rather than of his action, he compelled all these traffickers to withdraw in confusion, as he exclaimed, "Take these things hence:—Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise!" (John ii. 13—17.)

This action of our Lord is carefully to be distinguished from the similar action which he performed towards the end of his ministry, and which is the only one related by the other Evangelists. The second purification of the temple took place during the last week of our Lord's life, after the death of John the Baptist, when it could not be said, as is said here, that *afterwards* Christ dwelt and baptized in Judæa.

This striking act could not fail to draw the attention of the Jews towards our Saviour. It would be admitted by even the Pharisees that a divine messenger could claim a right to purify the theocracy in the manner of the ancient prophets, but they would require him to produce the proofs of divine mission before this right could be recognised. Therefore they gathered round him, and asked, "What sign showest thou, seeing that thou dost these things?" (John ii. 18). To which he returned the answer, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." This was an obscure allusion to his own future death through them, and his resurrection on the third day.



179.—Christ with the Doctors in the Temple. (Overbeck.)
Crist gyd a'r Doctoriaid yn y Deml.



181.—Calling of St. Andrew and Simon Peter.
Galw St. Andreas a Simon Petr.



182.—Saint Matthew. (Rubens.)
Sant Mathew.



184.—Saint Luke. (Cornelius.)
Sant Luc.



183.—Saint Mark. (Rubens.)
Sant Marc.



180.—Lake and Town of Tiberias.
Llyn a Dinas Tiberias.



185.—Marriage at Cana.
Priodas yn Cana.



192.—Screech Owl.—Isaiah xxxiv. 14.
Yr Wyll.



186.—Desolation of Babylon.—Isaiah xiii.
Anghyfannedd-dra Babilon.



188.—Reeds.—Isaiah xix. 6, 7.
Corsenau (cyrs.)



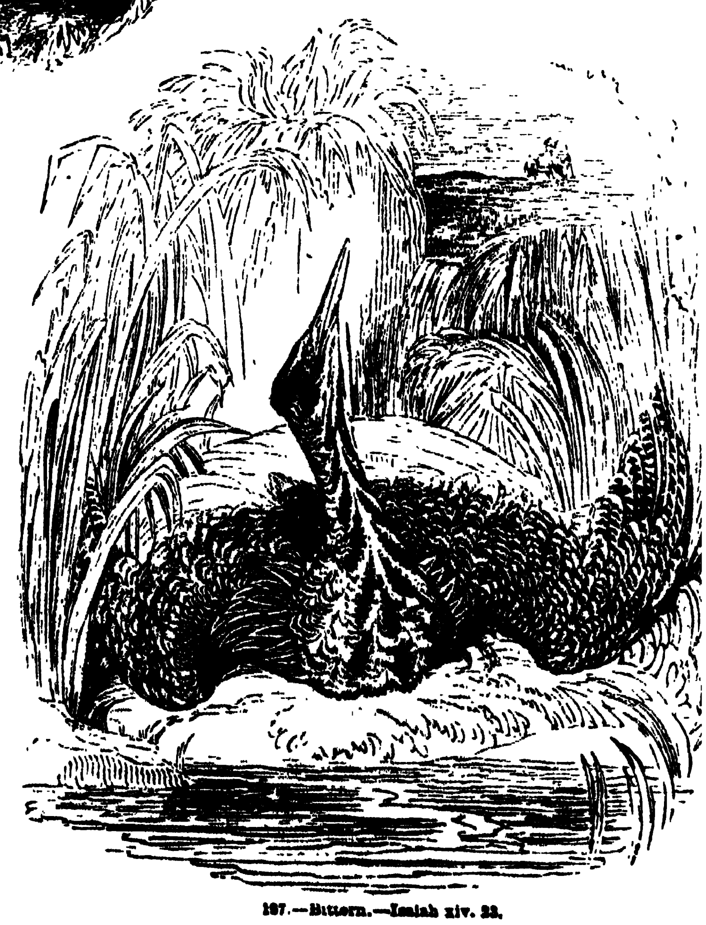
191.—Rock Goat.—Isaiah xxxiv. 6.
Gafr y Graig (Alpafr).



189.—Fitches.—Isaiah xxviii. 27.
Ffacbys.



190.—Desolation of Idumea. View of a Portion of the Ruins of Petra.—Isa. xxxiv. 5, 6
Anghyfannedd-dra Edom. Golygf. [illegible] o Adfeilion Petra.



187.—Bittern.—Isaiah xiv. 23.
Aderyn y bwn.

SUNDAY VII.—THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

ISAIAH XV.—XXXV.

SOME of the many interesting allusions in this group of chapters to objects in nature and art, may be indicated under the divisions to which they severally belong.

In the ANIMAL KINGDOM the most remarkable are the "bittern" in xiv. 23, and the "satyr" and "screech-owl" of xxxiv. 14.

The bird which our translation calls a *bittern* is named in the original Hebrew *kippod.* This word occurs but thrice in Scripture, twice in Isaiah (xiv. 23; xxxiv. 11), and once in Zephaniah (ii. 14). That the meaning of the word is utterly uncertain, appears from the fact that nearly a dozen different birds and animals have been pointed out for it, such as bittern, bustard, heron, owl, osprey, porcupine, hedgehog, beaver, otter, and even tortoise! This being the case, we may be readily excused from offering an opinion on the subject. In the text before us the *kippod* is associated with pools of water amidst the desolations of Babylon, which seems to point to some creature resorting to fens and solitary wilds; and in Zephaniah it is named among several birds, and is described as perching, if not roosting, on the highest points of buildings, and there uttering its notes. From this there can be little doubt of its being a bird. The marshy desolations of Babylon are at this day frequented by immense numbers of aquatic birds, from the pelican and heron down to the widgeon: but aquatic animals are exceedingly rare; and of the animals named in the above list there is only one, the porcupine, which is found in the region where the Scripture places the *kippod,* and that animal does not resort to pools of water.

The "screech-owl" of xxxiv. 14, is a translation of the Hebrew word *lilith,* from a root signifying "night;" and some night-bird inhabiting ruined places is undoubtedly intended: a species of owl is probably denoted by the word. It is to be observed that the prophet is speaking of the then future desolations of the land of Edom; and it is therefore well worthy of notice, that the melancholy hoot of the owl is one of the few sounds which travellers incidentally describe as breaking in upon the silence which hangs over Petra, the forsaken metropolis of that land. In illustrating one of the allusions to owls contained in this chapter, namely, "The owl also, and the raven (or crow) shall dwell in it," xxxiv. 11, Dr. Keith, in his 'Evidence of Prophecy,' says, "The owl and raven do dwell in it. Captain Mangles relates, that while he and his fellow-travellers were examining the ruins and contemplating the sublime scenery of Petra, the screams of the eagles, hawks, *and owls,* which were soaring above their heads in considerable numbers, seemingly annoyed at any one approaching their lonely habitation, added much to the singularity of the scene."

The "satyr" of our text (xxxiv. 14) is allowed to be a species of goat, and there is little doubt of its being the "mountain-goat" called by the Arabs *beden,* and which is in fact a variety of the ibex. It is here mentioned as inhabiting the mountains of Edom; and Burckhardt informs us that in all the wadys south of the Arnon these mountain-goats are found, in large herds, forty or fifty together. They are killed by the inhabitants of Kerek and Tayfle (the only inhabited towns in this quarter), who hold the flesh in high estimation. They sell the large horns to the Hebron merchants, who carry them to Jerusalem, where they are worked into handles for knives and daggers. The traveller himself saw at Kerek a pair of horns three feet long. The Arabs told him it was difficult to get a shot at them; and that the hunters hide themselves among the reeds on the banks of the streams, to which the animals resort in the evening to drink. They also asserted that, when perceived, the animals will throw themselves from heights of fifty feet and more, upon their heads, without receiving any injury. The same thing is asserted of the same animal by the hunters in the Alps.

In the VEGETABLE KINGDOM we find particular notice of *Reeds* (xix. 67), *Olive-trees* (xxiv. 13), and *Fitches* (xxviii. 25).

The *reed,* as is well known, is a shrub plant, out of whose knotty root many long hollow stems are put forth, which by knots are divided into several limbs. The leaves are sharp-edged and cutting; instead of blossoms, there appear outspread ears of the form of ostrich feathers. It grows in humid marshy places, in ponds, and on the banks of rivers (Exod. ii. 3; 1 Kings xiv. 15; Job viii. 11; Isa. xix. 6; xxxv. 7). It has been noticed by several travellers that the banks of the river Jordan and the margin of the lake Huleh ("the waters of Merom"), in Palestine, are covered with various species of reed. Because reed, on account of the length and weakness of its culm, is moved to and fro by the slightest blast, it is used as an image of a tottering kingdom (1 Kings xiv. 15). A man bent down by misfortune and sorrow is figuratively called a broken reed (Isa. xlii. 3). When the Roman soldiers, in their scorn and derision, hailed Jesus as the King of the Jews, they placed in his hand for a sceptre a reed (Matt. xxvii. 29), to indicate the frailness and futility of his kingdom. A tall and strong species of reed (the *Arundo donax*) was used as a stick for support, both in standing and in walking; but if such a stick broke, the point or splinter of the broken reed wounded the hand bearing on it for support. This explains a striking passage in the message sent by the Assyrian general Rabshakeh to King Hezekiah, as noticed by our prophet (Isa. xxxvi. 6): "Behold, thou didst rely on that broken reed Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce it." (Compare Ezek. xxix. 6, where the same figure is in a manner equally applied to Egypt.) The splinter of a broken reed inflicts a painful wound. And we are told by Theodoretus that one of the tortures which the primitive Christians had to suffer was that of having the broken and pointed sticks of reeds driven in under the nails of their hands and feet, and into other parts of their body. It appears that the Hebrews used the reed as a measuring-rod for buildings. The length of such a measuring-rod was six ells, and this is said to be the natural length of the strong broad-leaved reed (Ezek. xl. 3, 5; Rev. xi. 1; xxi. 15, 16).

The word translated "paper-reed" in this chapter (Isa. xxxiv. 7) denotes various kinds of green plants growing by rivers, *including* the paper-reed; but the paper-reed itself is denoted by the word translated "rush" in the next chapter (xxxv. 7), and denotes the rush from which a kind of writing-paper was made, specimens of which may be seen in the papyrus rolls which are now found in most collections of Egyptian antiquities. Our word "paper" comes from the name of this plant. It is elsewhere mentioned by our prophet (viii. 2) as the material with which boats were made. Such boats are often mentioned by ancient authors, and, judging from what is now done on the Euphrates and Tigris (where, however, the palm-leaf is used instead of rushes), it would appear that in fabricating such boats the rushes were interwoven, like basket-work, upon a frame-work of stout stems, and then rendered impervious to water by being coated over with bitumen. Accordingly the mother of Moses, when she made her little ark or basket with these same rushes, did not neglect to "daub it with slime and pitch" (Exod. ii. 3).

The *olive-tree* (xvii. 6; xxiv. 13) is constantly alluded to in the Scriptures as the most important of all the fruit-trees in Palestine. It was as common there as the palm-tree in Egypt, and was relatively as important to Palestine as the palm-tree to that country. Its fruit not only supplied a useful and wholesome article of food, but furnished an oil which was much used as salad-oil and in the preparation of food, as well as in lamps and for anointing the person. Plantations of olives abounded in the land, and the remains of them are observed in spots not now inhabited. On the Mount of Olives near Jerusalem several venerable old olive-trees suit well with the associations of the spot, although, of course, the identical trees cannot be referred back to the time when the mount derived its name from the olive-groves by which it was covered. From the comparison of the two passages in which olive-trees are mentioned in these chapters, with the law which forbade the proprietor of an olive-ground, when beating off the olives, to go over the boughs a second time, in order that something might be left for the olive-gleaners—it appears, that the Hebrews followed the practice, still usual in Italy and Palestine, of beating off the ripe olives with a long pole. This process was calculated to bring down more of the olives, both ripe and unripe, than mere shaking, and was therefore the more likely to be followed by persons who were precluded from a second operation. But as shaking the olive-tree is mentioned in the text, it is probable that the poor were not allowed to beat the olive-tree again (this being somewhat injurious), but only to shake off, when ripe, those which had remained unripe upon the tree at the first gathering.

The "*fitches*" in our translation of xxviii. 25, are supposed to be represented by the *Nigella sativa,* a ranunculaceous plant much cultivated in Western Asia for the sake of the small black seeds, which have from time immemorial been used as a condiment, much in the same way that carraway and coriander seeds are employed by ourselves.

SUNDAY VII.—BIBLE HISTORY.

THUS assured, Moses no longer declined the task imposed upon him. He rendered up his pastoral charge to Jethro; and, taking his wife and children, turned his steps towards Egypt. Before he reached that country, he was met by his elder brother Aaron, from whom he doubtless received full information of the state of affairs in Egypt, and of the present condition and feelings of the Israelites.

Arrived in Egypt, the brothers assembled the elders of Israel; and Moses related the mission which he had received, and exhibited the miraculous powers which had been intrusted to him to prove its truth. Then the people believed, "and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped" (Exod. iv. 31).

After this, Moses and Aaron, attended by the chiefs of Israel, presented themselves before the throne of Egypt, and demanded, in the name of JEHOVAH, that his people should go forth to hold a solemn sacrifice and festival in the desert.

The insolent pride with which Pharaoh received the message communicated by Moses, "Who is JEHOVAH! that *I* should obey his voice, to let Israel go. I know not JEHOVAH, neither will I let Israel go?" (Exod. v. 2); the obstinacy which he afterwards exhibits, when the Divine punishments fall upon him one after another, in choosing rather to see the destruction of his land and people, than to yield—are proved by the monuments, which the Egyptians have left behind them, to be in accordance with the genuine spirit of a Pharaoh. A comparison of the representation of the victory of Remeses Mi-amun in Thebes, as explained by Champollion, is of special interest in this connection. The trophies of victory (the severed right hand, and other members of the body) are there laid at the feet of the king, who sits quietly in his chariot, while the horses are held by his officers, and addresses this haughty speech to his warriors: "Give yourselves to mirth; let it rise to heaven. Strangers are dashed to the ground by my power. The terror of my name has gone forth; their hearts are full of it. I appear before them as a lion; I have pursued them as a hawk; I have annihilated their wicked souls; I have passed over their rivers; I have set fire to their castles; I am to Egypt what the god Mandoo has been; I have vanquished the barbarians; Amun-Re (the greatest of the Egyptian gods), my father, has subdued the whole world under my feet, and I am king on the throne for ever." The literal truth of this translation has indeed been disputed; but the spirit which the speech breathes, may easily be recognised from it. There is no doubt that the Egyptian kings, in their pride, named themselves kings of the whole world; and it has been established by the monuments, that they, in this arrogance, claimed divine honours for themselves.

Not only was the application made by Moses refused, but the exactions and the inflictions upon the Israelites were redoubled, to punish them for having made it. Hitherto they had been allowed straw with which to compact the bricks, the manufacture of which formed their chief labour; but now this was refused, and although much of their time was consumed in collecting the straw, the full tale of bricks was required from them; and the officers of the children of Israel, whom the overseers of Pharaoh had placed over them, were beaten because the task was not performed. This scene is placed vividly before us by the Egyptians, which offer many representations of "labour stimulated by the persuasive powers of the stick."

The Hebrew people now began to complain against Moses and Aaron for having thus increased their troubles by their ill-considered demands; and Moses himself complained to the Lord that the condition of the people had not been bettered, but much worsened by his interference.

Then the word was given for that extraordinary series of visitations known as the Plagues of Egypt, for the purpose of convincing the king of the power of the God whom the Hebrews served, and of the dread consequences of resisting his demand. The effect of some of these was weakened to the mind of Pharaoh by the impostures of his magicians, by whom some of them were simulated. But the terrible visitation which each plague brought could only be removed at the intercession of Moses; and at that intercession they were successively removed, on promises from the king of attention and compliance, which were neglected so soon as the penal effects had ceased. Hence these visitations rose in severity, till the last terrible and overwhelming calamity produced the designed result.

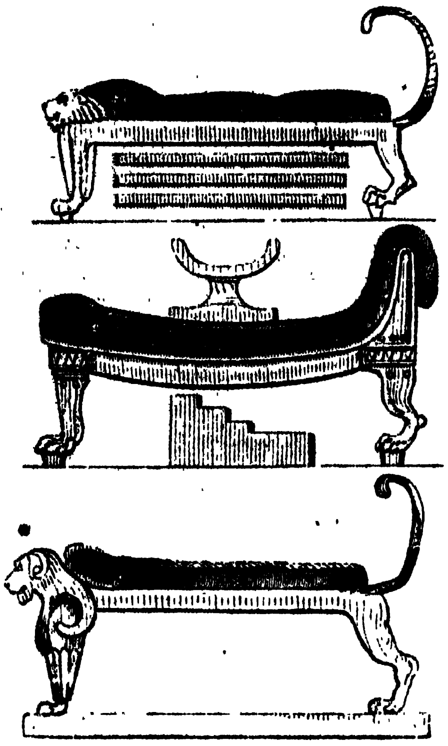
They were preceded by a sign, or miracle, performed in the presence of Pharaoh and his court, and intended to authenticate the divine mission which Moses had received. Attended by the elders of Israel, Moses and his brother Aaron again presented themselves before the king; and the latter having cast down his rod upon the ground, it was at once changed into a serpent, in the sight of all that illustrious audience. Instead of yielding to the force of that evidence which this miracle conveyed, the king sent for his "wise men and sorcerers," who "did in like manner with their enchantments; for they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents." This hardened the king in the course he had marked out for himself: and although the inferiority of the seeming miracle of the magicians was evinced by the fact of Aaron's serpent-rod swallowing up theirs, the king persuaded himself that he had an excuse for withholding his consent to the demand made in the name of Jehovah. We are expressly told, that the "wise men" of Egypt performed their simulated wonder by "enchantment," which word denotes not merely magical agencies, but any kind of legerdemain, or scientific or artistical contrivance. The Egyptian priests were deeply learned in all the secrets of nature and art, which were hidden from their contemporaries, and which, indeed, they treasured up as mysteries peculiar to their order, and to which none but the highest members, even of that order, were admitted. There is no manner of doubt that it was by such means that they were enabled to imitate, in appearance, some of the miracles performed by Moses and Aaron.

This counter-wonder of the Egyptian magicians was founded on the peculiar condition of Egypt: and much more so was the Mosaic sign; for through it the prophet was furnished with power to perform that which the magicians of Egypt most especially gloried in, and by which they most of all supported their authority. The charming of serpents has been native to Egypt, from the most ancient even to the present time; and although the art is now beheld by us without those sacred associations which invested it with awe and wonder in and after the time in which Moses lived, enough remains to enable us to form some conception of the effects then produced. Even those who have entered upon an examination of the subject with the most absolute unbelief, such as the scientific commissioners attached to the French army in Egypt, have been forced into the conviction, that there was something in it, which their philosophy could not reach, and which compelled them to conclude that the Psylli (as these serpent-charmers were anciently called) were in possession of some secret charm, which placed them in a condition to bring about the most wonderful consequences. It was at first believed that they removed the teeth of serpents and the stings of scorpions, that they might handle them with impunity; but this suspicion has been disproved by repeated examination. Indeed, this wondrous art is still a mystery; it descends from father to son, and the serpent-charmers in Egypt form an association claiming to be the only individuals who are able to charm serpents or free houses from them. Their sleight of hand is very various. They are able, according to their own assertions, to make the Haje (the species of serpent they especially make use of in their tricks) rigid as a staff, and to appear as if dead; and then, at pleasure, make them relax into vitality again. An eminent naturalist, Col. C. Hamilton Smith, (in Art. "*Adder*" in the 'Cyclop. of Biblical Literature,') informs us that the inflation of which this serpent is capable can, by a peculiar pressure on the neck, be rendered so intensely rigid, that the serpent can be held out horizontally, as if it were a rod; and that the restoration of vitality is produced by liberating the animal, or by throwing it on the ground. This seems quite to explain how the magicians were able to make their real serpents appear, at first, as rods, which, when cast upon the ground, recovered their vital action, imitating, by reversed effects, the deed of Aaron, whose real rod became a serpent.

Then began the plagues. The first changed into blood the pleasant waters of the health-giving Nile; and although they succeeded in apparently turning some water into blood, they were not able to reverse the miracle, as Moses did when signs of contrition were manifested by the king. We are not required to understand that by this miracle the waters of Egypt were changed into real blood, but only to a blood-red colour; so that the blood here is the



194.—Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh. (N. Poussin.)—Exod. vii.
Moses ac Aaron ger bron Pharaoh.



198.—Egyptian Couches.
Glythau yr Aipht



193.—Moses. (B. West.)



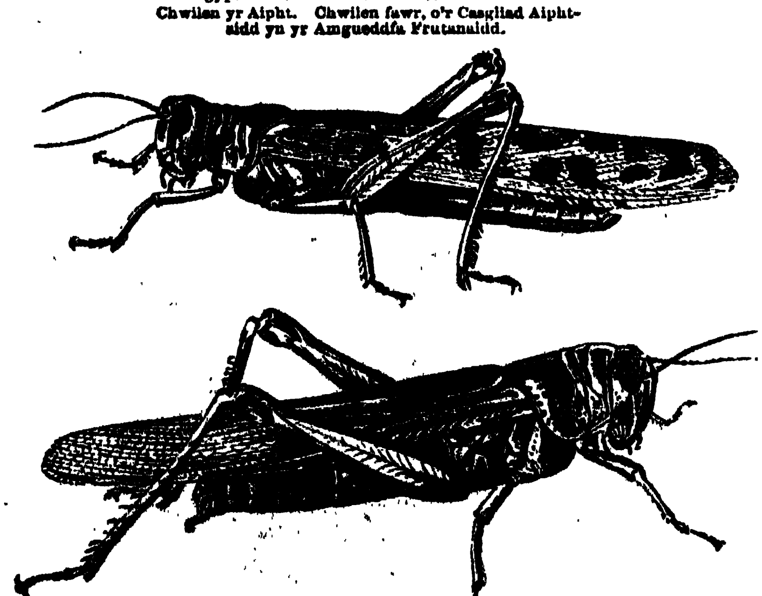
195.—Egyptian Frogs.—Exod. viii.
Llyffaint yr Aipht.



199.—Blatta Ægyptiaca. A Colossal Beetle, from the Egyptian Collection in the British Museum.
Chwilen yr Aipht. Chwilen fawr, o'r Casgliad Aiphtaidd yn yr Amgueddfa Frutanaidd.



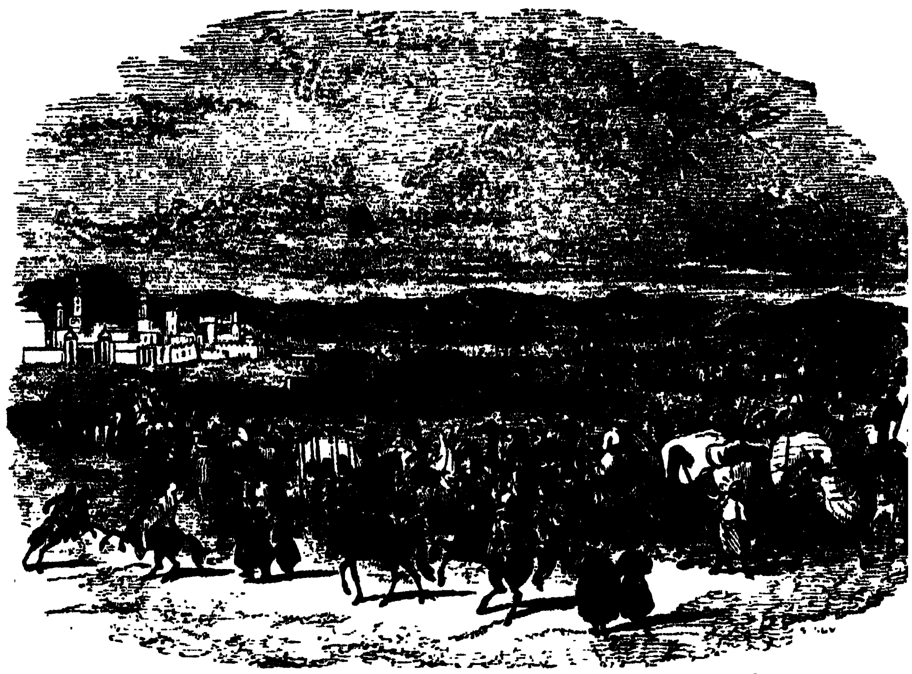
197.—Hyssop.—Exod. xii. 22.
Isop.



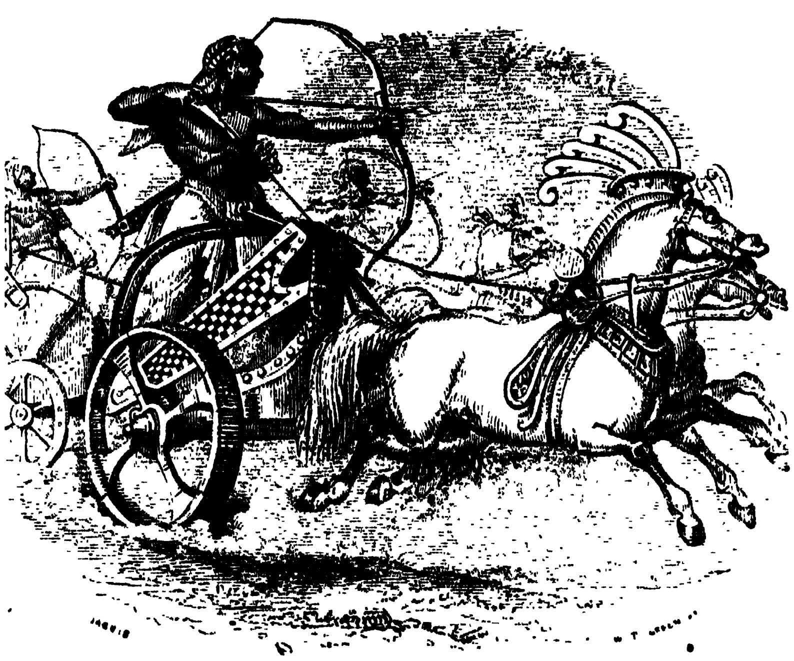
196.—Locusts.—Exod. x.



205.—Kelauts in Persia.
Kelauts yn Persia.



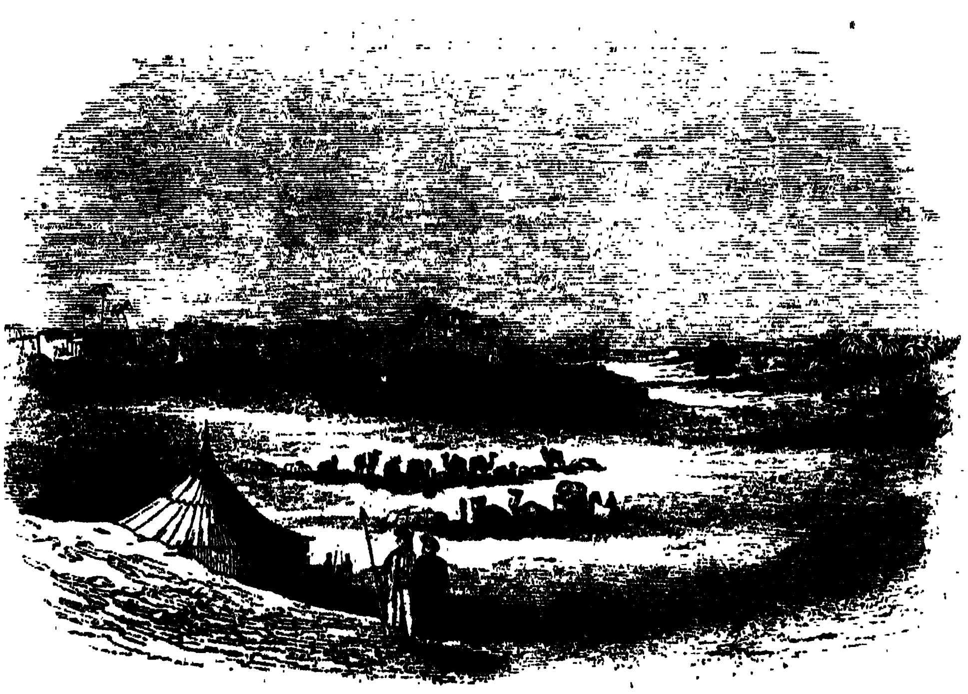
200.—An Oriental Migration.
Ymfudiad Dwyreiniol.



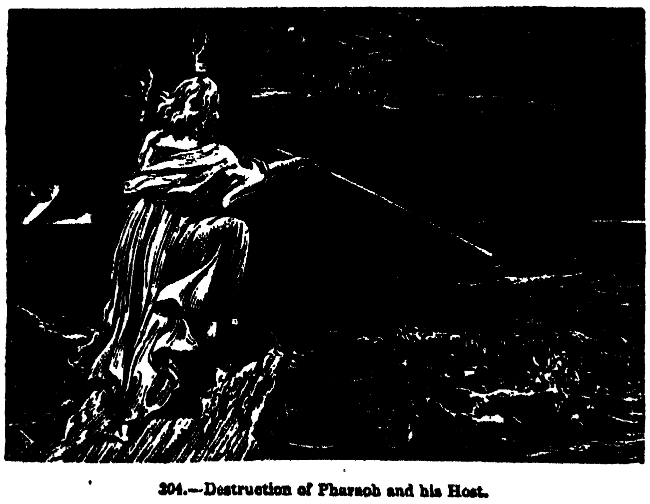
202.—Egyptian War-chariots.
Cerbydau Rhyfel yr Aipht.



203.—Egyptian Soldiers of different Corps.
Milwyr Aiphtaidd o wahanol Fyddinoedd.



201.—Birket el Hadj, or Pilgrims' Pool (Succoth ?).
Birket el Hadj, neu Lyn y Pererin.



204.—Destruction of Pharaoh and his Host.
Dinystr Pharaoh a'i Lu.

same as the "water red as blood" in 2 Kings iii. 32. That there is found something analogous to this in the natural phenomena of Egypt has long since been pointed about. It is admitted that the waters of the Nile, a short time before the inundation, take a green, and at the beginning of the inundation a red colour. The cause of this change has not been fully investigated In common years the water when it is green and when it is red is drinkable: but sometimes, in years of great heat, this peculiarity of the water becomes a great calamity, as it then becomes so offensive that people of delicate stomachs cannot drink it, and content themselves with well-water. If that calamity which came at the word of Moses were the same as this, then the wonder would consist in its coming in at the time appointed by the prophet; in its coming not, as usual, gradually, but suddenly, at the moment when his rod was lifted up; and in the time itself not being the usual time, which is about the middle of the year, but many months sooner than it has ever been known to occur in the ordinary course of nature; and still more, in the extraordinary character of the visitation, indicated by the fact that all the fish in the river died, which effect never ensues from the natural reddening of the waters. There is an intended emphasis in the information that "the Egyptians *loathed* to drink the waters of the river," which must not be overlooked. It is founded upon the importance which the Nile water has for the Egyptians, and upon the almost passionate love of the inhabitants of Egypt for it. The water of the Nile is, in fact, the only drinkable water in Egypt; for the water of the few wells is distasteful and unwholesome. The Turks find this water so pleasant, that they are said to eat salt on purpose to be able to drink the more of it. They are accustomed to say, that if Mohammed had drunk thereof, he would have asked an immortality on earth, that he might always drink of this water. If the Egyptians undertake a pilgrimage to Mecca, or travel elsewhere, they speak of nothing but the delight which they shall experience when, on their return, they shall again drink the pleasant water of their great river. Under due reference to these circumstances we shall perceive the peculiar force of the terms employed in describing the Egyptians as loathing the water which they usually prefer before all the water in the world; nd as choosing rather to drink well-water, which is in their country so unpleasant.

The second plague brought frogs in myriads upon every pleasant place in Egypt; and although the magicians simulated this miracle also, Moses only, at a time previously appointed, could remove the evil.

The third plague was formed by gnats, which are even in ordinary years very troublesome in Egypt, and the vast increase of which must have rendered life insupportable. In trying to imitate this, the magicians failed, and they acknowledged "This is the finger of God." But the heart of Pharaoh was still hardened.

Then came the fourth plague, that of the "flies,"—probably the dog-fly, which is remarkably troublesome in Egypt, from its disposition to alight upon the edge of the eye-lid. This brought Pharaoh to urge the Hebrews to keep their feast and offer their sacrifices in Egypt. But Moses answered—"It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God: lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us?" (Exod. viii. 26.) This is usually understood to mean that the Egyptians would be offended by the Israelites offering the same animals which they worshipped. But an accomplished German divine, Hengstenberg, has suggested a very different view. He argues that "the designation 'abomination' is not appropriate to the consecrated animals. This indicates that the animals which the Israelites slaughtered were not considered too good, but too bad for offerings. The animals which were commonly taken among the Israelites for offerings, were also among the Egyptians not sacred. The only one of the larger domestic animals which was usually regarded as sacred by them was the cow; and this was not offered by the Israelites, except under the peculiar and unusual circumstances described in Num. xix. The offence was, rather, that the Israelites omitted the inquiry concerning the cleanness of animals, which was practised with the greatest caution by the Egyptians. That only clean animals were offered by the Egyptians, Herodotus says, in that remarkable passage (ii. 45) where he acquits the Egyptians from the imputation of offering human sacrifices:—'For since they are not allowed to sacrifice any animals except the swine and the bullock and calves, namely, those that are clean among them, and the goose, how can they offer men?' What stress they laid upon cleanness, and how truly it was considered an abomination to offer an unclean animal, is seen from the same author (ii. 38). Only a red ox could be offered, and a single black hair rendered it unclean. They also placed dependence on a multitude of marks besides this; the tongue, the tail, were accurately examined, &c. Every victim, after a prescribed examination, in confirmation of its fitness was sealed on the horns; and to offer an unsealed ox was prohibited on pain of death."

Under the *fifth* plague the animals of Egypt were smitten by a grievous murrain, while those of the Israelites sustained no harm.

The plague of boils and blains upon the bodies of all the Egyptians, including the magicians, was the sixth. It was miraculous chiefly in its circumstances and in its extent; the disease itself having been so common in Egypt, that, in Deut. xxviii. 27, it is described as "the boil of Egypt."

The seventh plague was a tremendous tempest of hail, by which men and cattle were slain, the trees broken, and the produce of the fields crushed down. The whole crop of the flax and the barley was smitten, for it had grown up; but the wheat and spelt escaped, as these came later to maturity. No hail fell in the land of Goshen, which the Israelites inhabited.

As the heart of Pharaoh was not moved by all these wonders, another plague was sent; it was that of the locusts, which came over the land in numbers without example, and speedily consumed every green thing which the hail had spared.

Then, as the ninth plague, came a terrible darkness over all that sunny land—a darkness dense beyond description,—and which allowed no one to stir from his place during the three days that it lasted. But all this time the Israelites had abundant light in Goshen.

One plague more, the *tenth*—terrible, fatal, effectual—was threatened before it came, that timely submission might haply avert the doom. It was the death of all the first-born in Egypt, from the first-born of "the king upon his throne, to the first-born of the maid-servant behind the mill." God, who knew the effect of this terrible stroke, directed the institution of a festival in commemoration of it, and that the Hebrews should stand ready for departure at the appointed time. The festival was called the Passover, because the destroying angel would *pass over* the doors marked with the blood of a lamb, which every Hebrew family was directed to slay, and eat in the posture of persons ready for a journey.

Already, according to the divine direction, the Hebrews had borrowed of their Egyptian neighbours various articles and ornaments of gold and silver, with which, according to custom, they might becomingly celebrate the great feast they were to hold in the wilderness. And by this time the renown of Moses had so spread among the people, and so lively a dread of his power was entertained, that the Israelites obtained freely whatever they asked. It is, indeed, evident from the whole narrative that the popular feeling among the Egyptians was by no means favourable to the course taken by the government in its obstinate and perilous refusal of the demand made in behalf of the Israelites.

The fatal night at length came—a night which formed a chief point of remembrance to the Jews in all succeeding generations. That night the Passover was, for the first time, celebrated by them; and in that night the first-born of all the Egyptians were smitten with instant death, so that no house was found in Egypt in which the most valued of its members had not died. Then a great cry arose in all the land, and the court, whatever might have been its own feeling, saw that the popular voice would no longer be controlled, and therefore, now, in this dreadful hour, the Hebrews were not only permitted to quit Egypt, but were urged forth with importunity and haste. Of this haste some notion may be formed from the fact, that they were unable to bake or even to leaven the dough which they had prepared for bread, and which they, therefore, took away with them as unleavened dough in their kneading-troughs.

They were all assembled with their flocks and herds in the land of Goshen, in the district of Rameses, and before the day had dawned the vast host of the Israelites, of whom the adult males alone numbered six hundred thousand, marched forth from the land of Egypt, and proceeded northward into the wilderness. The last day of bondage and the first of freedom is the most important in the history of any nation. So the Israelites felt theirs to be, and the Almighty fixed it in their memory by institutions more durable than monuments of brass or marble. Such was the Passover, and such the new decree which consecrated to the service of the Lord all the first-born of Israel in memory of their being spared when all the first-born of Egypt died.

As the southern parts of Palestine were occupied by the Philistines and other warlike nations, it was deemed inexpedient to lead the undisciplined and encumbered Israelites in that direction, although it was the nearest and the most usual route.

SUNDAY VII.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

THE Evangelist tells us "he spoke of the temple of his body," and many suppose that he indicated this signification by pointing to his own body as he spoke. Whether so or not, his audience understood him of the temple in whose courts they then stood, and they replied with anger, "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?" The deep feeling which this saying of our Lord's produced may be seen from the fact that it formed one of the most cogent accusations against him in his trial before the high-priest (Matt. xxvi. 61).

Among the persons in Jerusalem whose attention had been drawn to Jesus, was a member of the Sanhedrim, named Nicodemus, who felt desirous of privately conversing with so remarkable a personage. As a member of that ruling body, and on account of the rank which he thence held, he was reluctant to visit Jesus openly in the day-time, and therefore came to him in the night.

The manner in which he began the conversation seems to show that there were other members of the body to which he belonged as much impressed as himself with what they had seen and heard of Jesus, but who were not bold enough to come to him even by night. "Rabbi, *we* know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." This clear conviction, so heartily avowed, points out a man seeking instruction in a candid and open spirit. Jesus, therefore, sought by one word to turn the current of his thoughts from those notions respecting the temporal nature of the Messiah's kingdom which he and all other Jews entertained, and answered with more of apparent than of real abruptness, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (that is, cannot become my disciple). Nicodemus, full of earthly notions, was unable to grasp the idea of this second birth; and after having been made to comprehend that it was of a spiritual nature, he still inquired "How can these things be?" And then the Saviour, in a discourse full of divine instructions, and more suited to the understanding of his hearer, developed to him the holiness and final ends of his mission, so little in accordance with the notions of the Jews, who supposed the Messiah's kingdom was of this present world. This instruction had due effect on Nicodemus, who persevered in the faith imparted to him; but he maintained his position in the Sanhedrim, and declined a public avowal of his convictions, till after Christ had been crucified, when he openly joined Joseph of Arimathea in providing for the body an honourable burial (John xix. 39).

Soon after Jesus quitted Jerusalem with his disciples; but, instead of at once returning to Galilee, he remained some time in "the land of Judea" (as distinguished from Jerusalem, the metropolis), and began to baptize, through his disciples.

As John the Baptist was at the same time baptizing at Ænon, near Salim, a place near the Jordan, not far from that where Christ had been baptized by him, some of his disciples took offence at this. In general the disciples of John had more than those of Jesus of the things which belonged to the strict character of Judaism: they also fasted much. For this reason the Pharisees were displeased that Jesus was soon more followed and baptized more disciples than John, and by their representations, probably, did much to foment in John's disciples a discontent at the apparent rivalry of Jesus, and a jealousy of his superior claims.

Some of John's disciples came and reported these matters to him, expecting, doubtless, that he would feel aggrieved at such proceedings of one who had received baptism from his hands. But the truly humble Baptist, who felt satisfied with his own divine calling as a harbinger, and was ever mindful of his true position, first directed their attention to the fact, that if any one was called to occupy so great a sphere of action, this certainly could not be done without the will of God. He therefore would not obtrude himself, for this state of things was by no means unexpected by him, as he had announced from the beginning that he had himself only come to prepare the way of Christ.

It was not long after this that the Baptist was put in prison by Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee. The occasion was this:—

Herod Antipas had at first married the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia. On a journey to Rome he visited his brother Herod, surnamed Philip, whose wife was Herodias, daughter of another brother, Aristobulus, and consequently niece both to her husband and to Herod Antipas. With this lady the tetrarch formed a criminal attachment, and induced her to engage that on his return she would quit her own husband and live with him, on his undertaking to divorce the daughter of Aretas. She accordingly divorced herself from Philip, and was then married to Herod, whose own wife had retired to her father as soon as she heard of this atrocious engagement. This affair of course made a strong impression in the country. Few, however, ventured to say all they thought of the matter. But the Baptist, with the honesty and boldness which belonged to his character, publicly condemned the conduct of the tetrarch, and plainly told him that it was not lawful for him to live with his brother's wife. For this Herod put him into prison, not, it would appear, with any view of further punishment, but to stop him from speaking in this manner to the people, with whom his voice had great influence, of a transaction which would not bear the light. Herodias herself, indeed, wished to have him put to death, but the fear of the people, who regarded John as a prophet, hindered Herod from yielding to her barbarous desire.

It was not until John had been cast into prison, that Jesus returned from Judea to Galilee. In doing this he must needs go through the intermediate region of Samaria. The inhabitants of that country, the Samaritans, were descended from a mixture of Jews with the heathen colonists whom the kings of Assyria had settled in the country after the native Israelites had been extirpated (2 Kings xviii. 24). They eventually adopted the religion and manners of the Jews, but with some variation, which, with the character of their origin, rendered them odious to the Jews, who regarded them as an unclean and inferior people, and were quite as strongly disliked by the Samaritans in return. The principal, or at least the most obvious, ground of difference was, that the Samaritans had formed for themselves an ecclesiastical establishment and temple upon Mount Gerizim, which they held to be the true seat of the theocratical worship, as indicated by God himself. The Jews, on the contrary, who believed the same of their own establishment at Jerusalem, looked upon this schismatical temple with such abhorrence, that they deemed the land in which it stood, as well as the worshippers thereat, to be polluted; and the more strict among them, rather than travel through it, in going to or returning from the periodical festivals, were wont to cross the Jordan, and travel through the country beyond that river, without setting foot in Samaria. This circuitous route was, however, seldom taken by those who travelled on foot, who naturally preferred the direct road through Samaria, which in three days' journey brought them from Jerusalem to Galilee.

In the valley below the mountain on which their temple stood, lay the chief city of the Samaritans. It was the ancient Shechem; but at this time bore among the Jews the name of Sychar, which seems in its origin to have been a by-name, imposed upon the city in disparagement. On the approach to the town was a well, which being on the spot of ground which was the private property of Jacob, and which he bestowed on his son Joseph, bore the name of Jacob's well. The present well, which passes under this name, and which is in all probability the same, is situated at the foot of Mount Gerizim, near the entrance of the valley towards Jerusalem. It is above a mile from the present town, which accounts for its being now deserted; but it was probably nearer when the town was larger, and extended farther in this direction. It bears marks of high antiquity, and is dug in the solid rock. It is thirty-five feet deep, and fifteen feet of water were found in it by Maundrell in the month of March; but it was dry in the month of June, when visited by Dr. Robinson. If this be really the well of Jacob, and if its waters then failed in summer, these facts may assist in determining the time of the year in which Christ made this journey; for there was then water in the well, although it lay deep.

Jesus in his way to Galilee reached this well about noon, and, being weary with the journey, rested here while his disciples went forward into the town to purchase victuals. By this it would seem that he intended, after rest and refreshment, to continue his journey without stopping in, or, perhaps, going through, the Samaritan city. From the depth at which the water lay, Jesus, although thirsty, was unable to obtain drink from it; when, therefore, a woman came from the town to draw water, he said to her, "Give me to drink." It was not usual for Jews to speak to women in public, and they avoided occasions of speaking to the Samaritan people, and of eating or drinking with them, or of using, in eating or drinking, the vessels which they employed.



207.—Christ and Nicodemus. (Tintoretto.)
Crist a Nicodemus.



206 —Christ purifying the Temple.
Crist yn puro'r Deml.



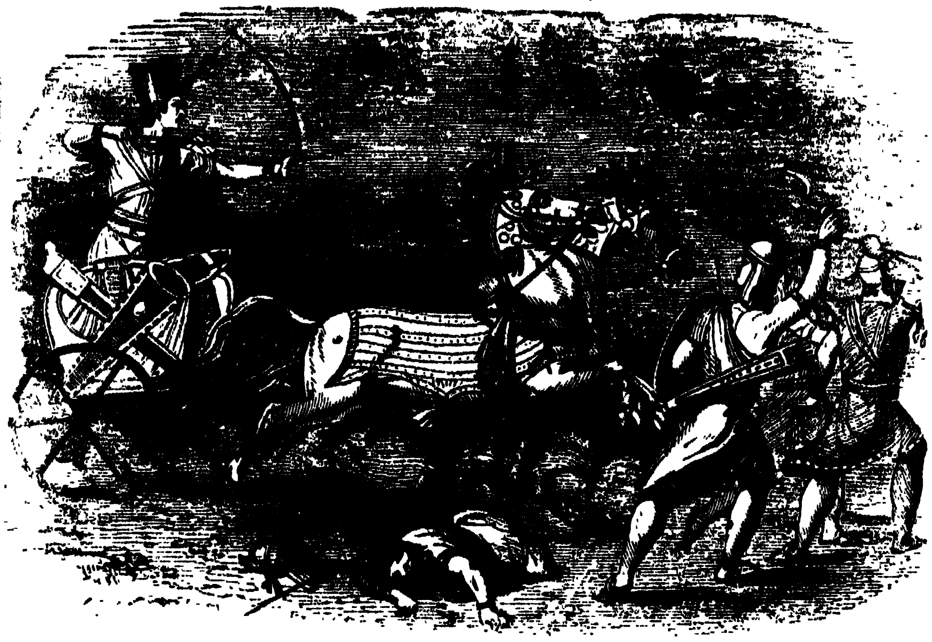
209.—Fortitude. (Reynolds.)
Gwroldeb.



208.—The Four Evangelists. (Jordaens.)
Y Pedwar Efengylwr.



210.—Faith. (Reynolds.)
Ffydd.



211.—Egyptian Chariot, &c. (Composed from Plates, Gau's 'Nubia,' &c.)—Exod. xiv.
Cerbyd Aiphtaidd, &c. (Cyfansoddedig o Lafnau, Gau's 'Nubia,' &c.)



214.—Egyptian Soldiers. (From 'Description de l'Egypte.')—Exod. xiv.
Milwyr Aiphtaidd. (O 'Ddisgrifiad de l'Egypte.')



215.—Adjeroud.



216.—Suez, from the North-east.
Suez, o'r Gogledd-orllewin.



212.—Moses at the Passage of the Red Sea. (N. Poussin.)—Exod. xiv.
Moses yn Mynedfa y Môr Coch.



213.—The Red Sea, viewed from Ras Mohammed, on the South-west Coast of Arabia Petræa.—Exod. xiv.
Y Mor Coch, fel y'i gwelir o Ras Mohammed, ar Oror De-orllewin Arabia Garegog.

SUNDAY VIII.—BIBLE HISTORY.

FOR this, among other reasons, the departing host took the road towards the Red Sea, the neighbourhood of which they reached after three days' journey.

This journey from the land of Goshen to the Red Sea has received much attention from Biblical geographers, who have scarcely succeeded in relieving it from all the obscurity in which they found it involved. In a work of this description the questions connected with this and other points in the journey of the Israelites do not admit of critical examination, and we must be content to state the results of those investigations which appear to us to have led to the most probable conclusions.

It is usual, when large parties prepare for a journey in the East, for all the travellers to assemble at a common rendezvous, where they arrange the details of the journey, and prepare for a regular start. Thus a place by the river of Ahava was the rendezvous of the exiles who returned to Judea under Ezra (viii. 15). And at the present day the great pilgrim caravan from Egypt to Mecca assembles at Birket-el-Hadj, or the Pilgrims' Pool, which some suppose may possibly have been the very place from which the Hebrews took their departure. In the present case the Hebrews knew well that they were to depart this night, and the point of rendezvous seems to have been at Succoth, which was where they first halted after quitting Rameses. To this point they seem to have hastened in detached parties, and there received the organization necessary for their movement in more regular order to their destination. As the name Succoth means "booths" or "tents," it is more than probable that it was a well-known station for such purposes. Such places are usually but a short distance from the place which furnishes the principal number of pilgrims or travellers; and the first stage is therefore always short, being, in fact, only to the place of meeting. This ought to satisfy those who cannot understand how the distance from Rameses to the border of the Red Sea could occupy three days; the shortness of the first stage accounts for it. On the second day they arrived at "Etham, on the edge of the wilderness." This is usually identified with the place now called Ad'eroud, which is at this day the third station of the great pilgrim caravan, and where there is an ancient fortress garrisoned by Egyptian troops, with a poor village and a copious well of water. Whether this be a correct identification or not, Etham was undoubtedly situated not far from the head of the Gulf of Suez; and in such a position, with reference to it, that the course taken from it determined the direction of the journey. Accordingly the Hebrew host here received orders to turn and encamp upon the shore of the gulf, between the sea and the mountains by which it was enclosed. If Etham were Adjeroud, they must have "turned" as directed in order to gain this position.

The Egyptian court seems to have watched the movements of the retiring host with great interest. The ostensible demand of the Israelites was to take three days' journey into the wilderness, and there offer their sacrifices to Jehovah. At Etham they had attained a point, whatever movement they made from which would determine their real intentions. That their intention was not to keep their feast at Etham and then return to Egypt, was evinced by their farther movement. On learning this, the king resolved to pursue them, and drive them back. In this design he was encouraged by learning the very strange position in which they were encamped, where, as he said, "they are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in." He saw that from the position they had taken up, if he came upon them in the north, and cut off their retreat in that direction, they must of necessity be either driven into the sea or back to Egypt through the valley of Badea. Alas! he knew not that the God who protected the house of Israel was able to open a pathway through the waters for their deliverance.

The facility with which the king assembled his forces, as soon as his resolution was formed, gives us an idea of the effective military organization of the Egyptians, which is amply confirmed and illustrated by histories and monuments. The "chosen" chariots of war were in number six hundred. These "chosen" chariots doubtless formed the guard of the king; other chariots are mentioned, but not the number, which must be estimated in this proportion. We have no reason to suppose this number overwhelming; but that it composed such a body of this much dreaded force as seemed needful for the immediate service. That service was one for cavalry, and, conformably to the accounts of the sacred historian, we now know that war-chariots composed the sole cavalry of Egypt. This formed the chief arm of Egypt's military strength, and was at once the force the most suited to this service, and that of which a people of pastoral habits like the Israelites, have always been found to stand in the most dread. Accordingly when the Egyptian forces actually made their appearance, the Hebrews seem not to have entertained the least notion of resistance, which indeed their position would scarcely, under any circumstances, have allowed. That position, however, protected them from being taken in flank by the Egyptians, who, on their part, finding their prey safe, as they thought, in the toils, were in no hurry to commence their operations, but rested themselves and their horses against the following day.

The Israelites, when they saw the Egyptians, were filled with alarm and terror, until they were re-assured by promises of a great deliverance, and a signal and final overthrow of their haughty pursuers. Accordingly, at the dead of night, the waters of the gulf were miraculously divided, and stood up on either hand like a wall, to afford the surrounded Hebrews a passage to the other side. Nor was this all: for, to protect their rear, and to guide their passage, there was a miraculous cloud placed between them and the Egyptians, which turned its radiant side to the former, and left the latter in utter darkness. This "pillar of cloud" had been before, and was after, their guide, as a mass of cloud by day and of flame by night.

No sooner did the Egyptians perceive the escape of the Israelites, than, with unparalleled hardihood, they hastened to pursue them by the open path through the waters. The whole host was in the channel, when He who had by his might upheld the waters, withdrew his hand, and instantly the vast void was filled, and the host of Pharaoh was overwhelmed by the returning waters. The ransomed Hebrews stood safely on the other side, and witnessed this great overthrow and the destruction of their enemies. Their confidence in both their Divine and human leader was restored, and they heartily joined with Moses in the noble song of triumph with which he celebrated this great event (Exod. xv. 1—19), while all the virgins of Israel followed Miriam with timbrels, dances, and exulting chants for this signal deliverance.

The reader is doubtless aware that there has been much dispute respecting the part of the Gulf of Suez at which the passage of the Israelites took place. The course of the account we have given has been to place it at a point several miles below the end of the gulf (probably at Ain Mousa), where the waters are of considerable depth. Many scholars and travellers have, however, strenuously contended that the passage took place at a place near Suez, where the ebb of the tide still leaves a practicable passage across the gulf. The difficulties of this notion are, to our minds, so insuperable, that it seems hard to understand how it can be held for a moment by the many gifted and pious persons by whom we know that it is entertained. If there ever was a special interposition of Divine Providence, or, in other words, a miracle, it was this passage of the Red Sea; nor is there any single event in Scripture which the sacred writers so repeatedly declare to be such. The condition of the ford at Suez was either the same then as now, or it was not. If it was not, the grounds which are now alleged for making this the point of passage, rather than at any other place, could not then exist; and if it were, there was no need of the miracle which is declared to have taken place; and the sacred writers are subjected to the serious imputation of claiming as a miracle a natural phenomenon of daily occurrence. If they had made such a claim, as they did, while the persons who had actually passed the sea were still living, while they still remained in the neighbourhood, and when the facts of the case could not be hidden from them, the prophet would have been laughed to scorn who told them they were delivered by a miracle. More than this, the Hebrews had been at least two days, if not three, encamped in front of this very spot, and could not fail to observe that it was twice a day left dry by the ebb of the tide. How then was it, in this case, that both they and the Egyptians deemed that no means of escape from their "entanglement" existed? and how was it that the Egyptians pursued the Hebrews, when they must have been acquainted with the condition of the tide, and could not but know that it would return upon them before they could get across? In that case, would not any man have preferred to have ridden round the beach, and attacked the Hebrews on the other side, as they came up from the bed of the gulf? These objections to the view which has of late years become popular, have never been fairly met and answered, nor do we believe that they are [illegible]



SUNDAY VIII.—THE PSALMS.

MUSIC OF THE HEBREWS.

THE Psalms contain more allusions to music and musical instruments than any other portion of Scripture. This provides us with a suitable opportunity of giving that degree of attention to the subject which the nature of the present work will admit.

Music is coeval with poetry. Musical instruments were the invention of Jubal (Gen. iv. 21); and as early as the time of Laban we are introduced to a whole choir (Gen. xxxi. 27). After this, music and poetry went hand in hand, and with equal pace. Music and (as we have seen) poetry were held in high estimation; and so long as such poetry as that of the Hebrews was cultivated, we may conclude that music was not neglected. This might also be inferred from the frequency of its use among them. They had music at marriages, at birth-days, on the days which reminded them of victories over their enemies, at the inauguration of their kings, and it even enlivened the journeys which the Law required the Jews to make three times a year to Jerusalem (Isa. xxx. 29). In the service of the holy tabernacle and of the temple the Levites were the musicians; but on other occasions any one might use musical instruments. The magnificent choir of Levites, under suitable leaders and directors, which David organized for the temple service, was kept up by Solomon after the erection of the temple, and was preserved till the overthrow of Jerusalem, although subject to occasional interruption under idolatrous kings. This choral establishment must have tended much to the cultivation of musical taste and power among the Hebrews. Hence the music and songs of Zion seem to have had a charm to the Babylonians. One of the most beautiful of the Psalms, composed during the Captivity, represents the exiles as disconsolately hanging their harps upon the willows growing beside the Euphrates, and as being pressed by the Babylonians to sing to them one of the songs of Zion, which produced the striking reply—"How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" &c. (Ps. cxxxvii. 4). After the Captivity, however, both the music and poetry of the Hebrews became much deteriorated.

Respecting the nature of the Hebrew music, our information is very scanty; but the similar history of the art among other ancient nations may assist our conclusions. It then consisted not so much in harmony as in unison or melody. This is the music of nature, and for a long time, even after the period of antiquity, it was common among the Greeks and Romans, and at this day characterises the music of the East. It was not the harmony of differing or dissonant sounds, but the voice, modulated after the tones of the lyre, that constituted the charm of the ancient music. The whole of antiquity is full of stories in praise of this music, and relating the wonderful influence over human passion and feeling which it acquired. That this ancient music did possess a wonderful mastery over the heart of man, seems as well established as any of the historical facts concerning which no doubt is entertained; and that instances of this are far more rare, if they ever occur, under the modern musical system, might suggest an interesting inquiry respecting what we have lost and what we have gained,—but this does not belong to the present place.

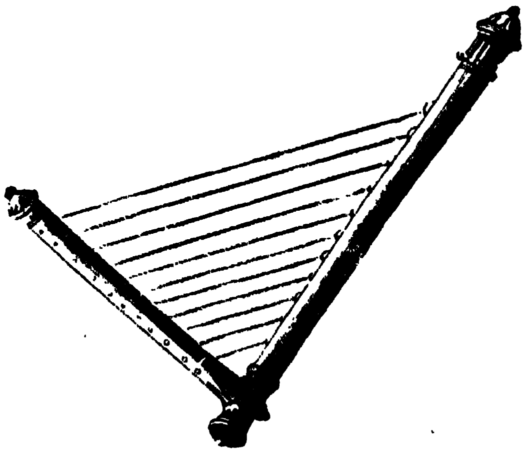
It has been mentioned that the names of many musical instruments occur in Scripture, especially in the Psalms. There is, however, great difficulty in determining the particular instruments to which these names refer. It is much more easy to form a general notion of the instruments possessed by the Hebrews than to make this special appropriation of the Hebrew names. We are not to suppose that there was anything peculiar in the Hebrew instruments of music, distinguishing them from those of other ancient Oriental nations. The Hebrews were by no means remarkable for invention. Mesopotamia, Syria, Egypt, doubtless originated most of the instruments with which they were acquainted; and such as they might obtain from such sources could not be materially different from those in use among the Greeks and Romans, who confessedly derived their instruments from the East. We are scarcely acquainted with the instruments of any of these nations except those of ancient Egypt, the figures of which have been happily preserved in the pictured tombs of that country, and supply an ample and rich fund of illustrative information, which has scarcely, until the present century, been brought fully to light. Next to this, figures of ancient classical instruments may be produced, for the reason indicated; and, lastly, the instruments of the modern East are not to be overlooked, supplying, as they do, the representatives at least of those which were anciently in use in the same countries. As the Psalms contain the names of all the musical instruments which were in use among the Hebrews, our usual course through them will afford sufficient opportunity of stating the results of the best information which has been brought to bear on this interesting subject.

"THE HARP AND PSALTERY" are mentioned together in Ps. xxxiii. 2, and elsewhere; and the "harp" is named without the psaltery in Ps. xliii. 4. It is to these two instruments that our present attention will be confined.

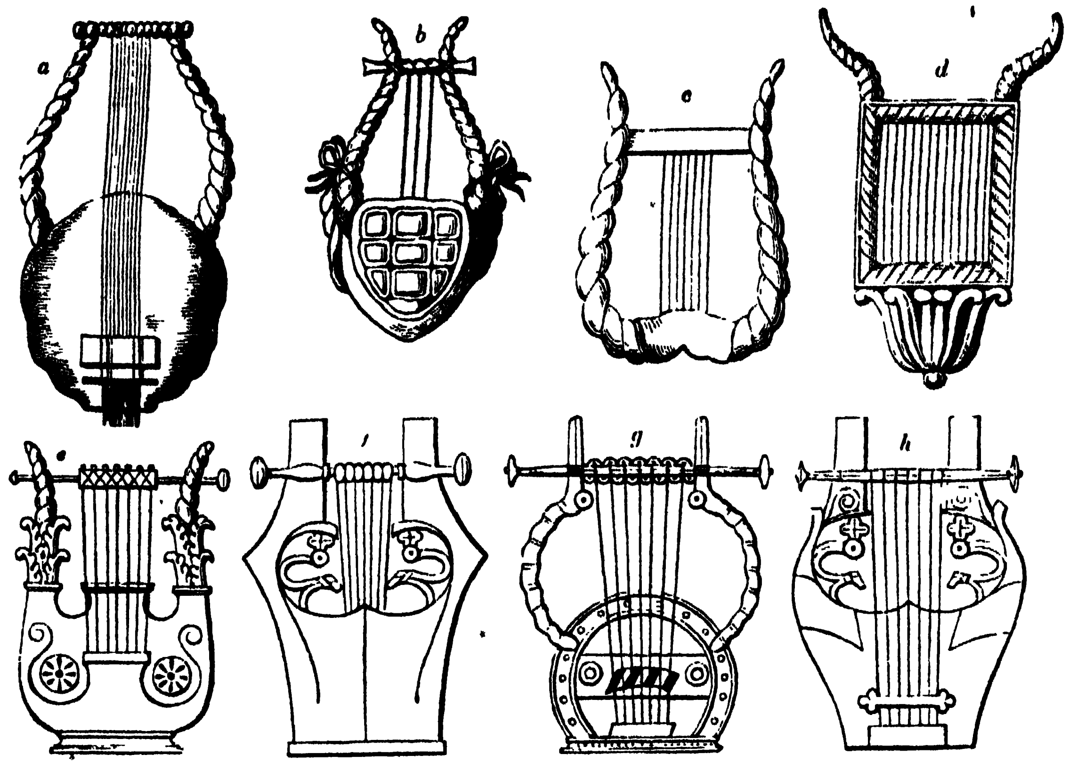
It is a very singular fact that no instrument answering to a harp exists in the modern East; and we could not be certain that it even ever did exist, but for the figures which appear in the Egyptian tombs, where we find harps of different kinds. The word translated "harp" in our version is *Kinnor*, and was more probably a sort of lyre than a harp. It is one of the instruments of which Jubal was the inventor, and is that of which David was so complete a master. One circumstance highly in favour of this conclusion is, that the ancient versions of the Scripture translate the Hebrew word by terms which were applied by the Greeks and Romans to their different kinds of lyres, of which there were many; and from their selecting *different* names to translate the same word, it would appear that the uncertainty of the translators only left them doubtful as to the *kind* of lyre which might be intended. This doubt we must be content to share, in offering the reader the most remarkable specimens of ancient lyres which we have been able to bring together. It may be further remarked, that from the brief intimations in Scripture respecting the kinnor, it appears that it was not a large and heavy instrument resting on the ground when played, as the word "harp" would suggest to our minds: but a light and portable instrument, which the musician bore upon his hand or arm, and might walk or dance as he played thereon. In fact, the kinnor is described as being used for the purposes, on the occasions, and in the manner in which we know the ancient lyre, and not the harp, to have been employed. It is also to be observed that the kinnor is described in the Scripture as the most ancient of stringed instruments; and it is to the lyre that the classical ancients ascribe the same priority of origin; and in Egypt the lyre is found on monuments more ancient than those on which the harp is seen. The lyre was also the most common stringed instrument among the ancient nations. It is impossible, therefore, that it should not hav been in use among the Hebrews, and being known to them, there is no other of their instruments than the *kinnor* which can be with any probability referred to it. If they had the lyre, it must have had a name; and we cannot find a name for it anywhere but in that of the kinnor.

These arguments, which are in substance the same that were first urged by the editor of the 'Pictorial Bible,' seem to furnish a mass of evidence, which, although necessarily circumstantial, is as conclusive as can well be expected in a matter so obscure. From the work just named, the following passage (under Ps. xliii.) may be cited as embodying all the information concerning the kinnor which the Scriptures furnish.

"This instrument was known before the Flood, being one of the two invented by Jubal, 'the father of such as handle the *kinnor* and the organ' (Gen. iv. 21). It is not again mentioned till six hundred years after the Deluge, and then so as to denote that it was used on festal occasions; since Laban complains that the private departure of Jacob prevented him from sending him away 'with songs, with tabret, and with kinnor.' The kinnor is not again noticed in the Pentateuch, nor till the time of Samuel, when we first find it mentioned so as to show that it was used by the prophets in their sacred music, for Samuel foretold Saul that he should meet a company of prophets, 'coming down from the high place, with a psaltery, a tabret, and a pipe, and a *kinnor*' (1 Sam. x. 5). Next we find it noticed as used by private persons, such as shepherds and others for their own solace; and that when skilfully played it was considered to have much influence upon the human passions, and in soothing the disturbed mind; for when Saul was afflicted with his melancholy madness, it was recommended that recourse should be had to 'a man who is a cunning player upon the *kinnor*:' the shepherd David was selected, and when the evil spirit came upon Saul, 'David took a *kinnor*, and played *with his hand*: so Saul was refreshed and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.' From this time we read frequently of the *kinnor*. The example of David, as king, probably recommended it to more extensive use; besides which the



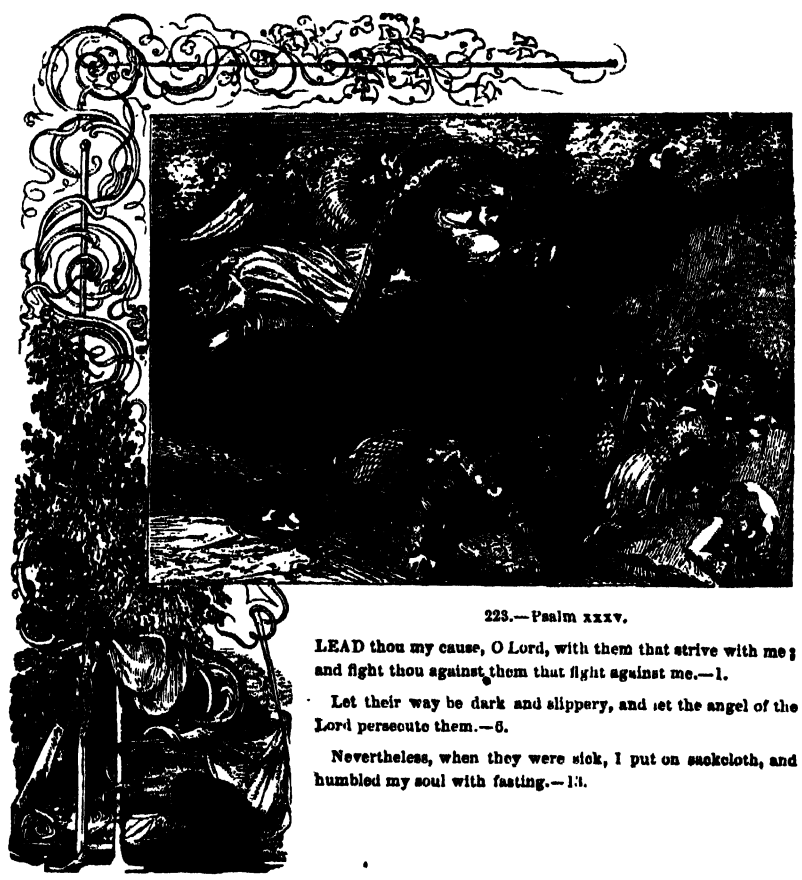
218.—Instrument from Herculaneum.
Offeryn o Herculaneum.



217.—*a*, *b*, Ancient Tortoise Lyres; *c*, *d*, *e*, *f*, *g*, *h*, Grecian Lyres.
a, *b*, Hen Delynau o gregyn crwban; *c*, *d*, *e*, *f*, *g*, *h*, Telynau Groegaidd.



219.—From Herculaneum.
O Herculaneum.



223.—Psalm xxxv.

LEAD thou my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me; and fight thou against them that fight against me.—1.

Let their way be dark and slippery, and let the angel of the Lord persecute them.—6.

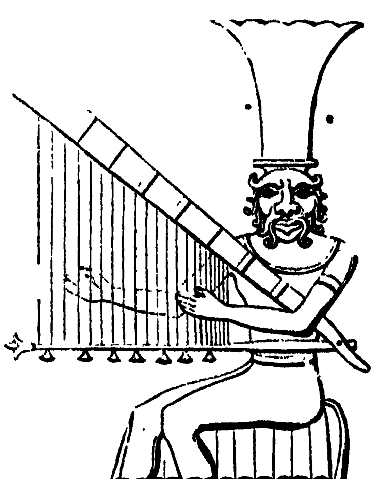
Nevertheless, when they were sick, I put on sackcloth, and humbled my soul with fasting.—13.



224.—Psalm xxxvi.



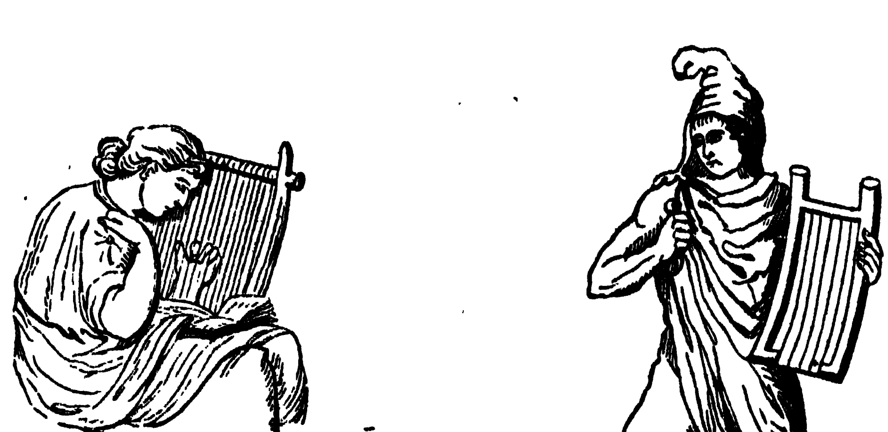
225.—Psalm xxxvii.



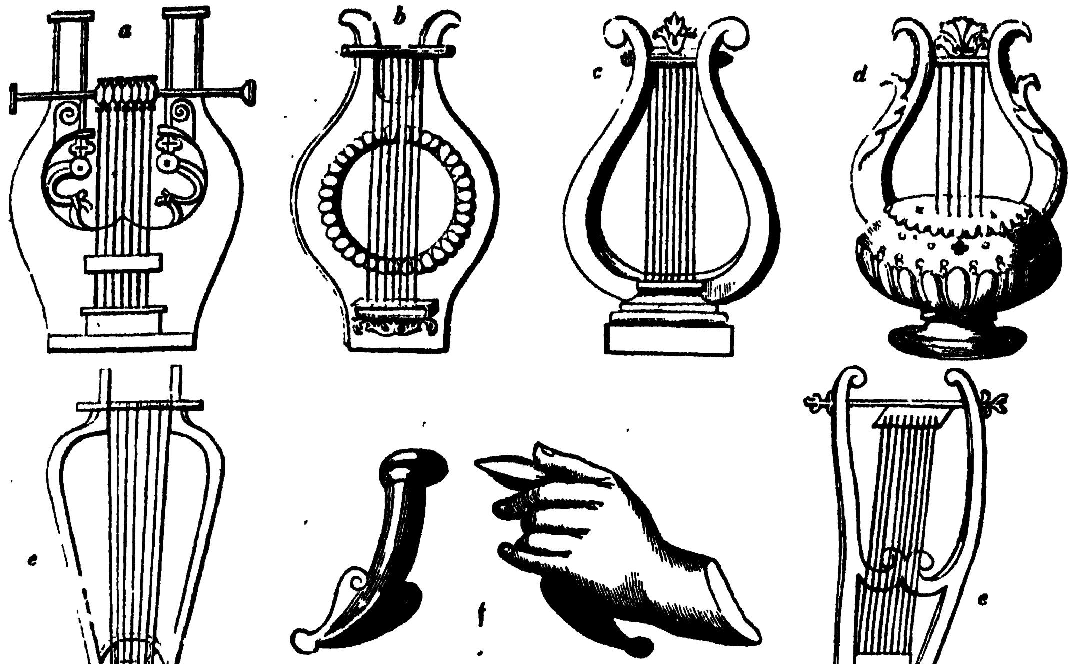
220.—Egyptian Instruments, from Rosellini.
Offeryn Aiphtaidd, o Rosellini.



221.—Egyptian Instrument, from Rosellini.
Offeryn Aiphtaidd, o Rosellini.

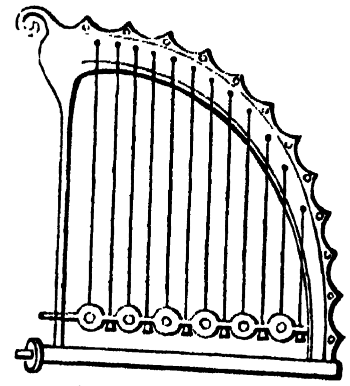


222.—Square Lyres. (Drawn from Vases found at Herculaneum.)
Telynau ysgwâr. (Wedi eu tynu oddi wrth Ddwr-gawgiau a gaed yn Herculaneum.)



226.—*a*, Grecian Lyre; *b*, Roman Lyre, from a Coin of Nero; *c*, Lyre of Timotheus; *d*, Lyre, from a Jewish shekel of Simon Maccabæus; *e*, *e*, Roman Lyre; *f*, Form and Mode of using the Plectrum.

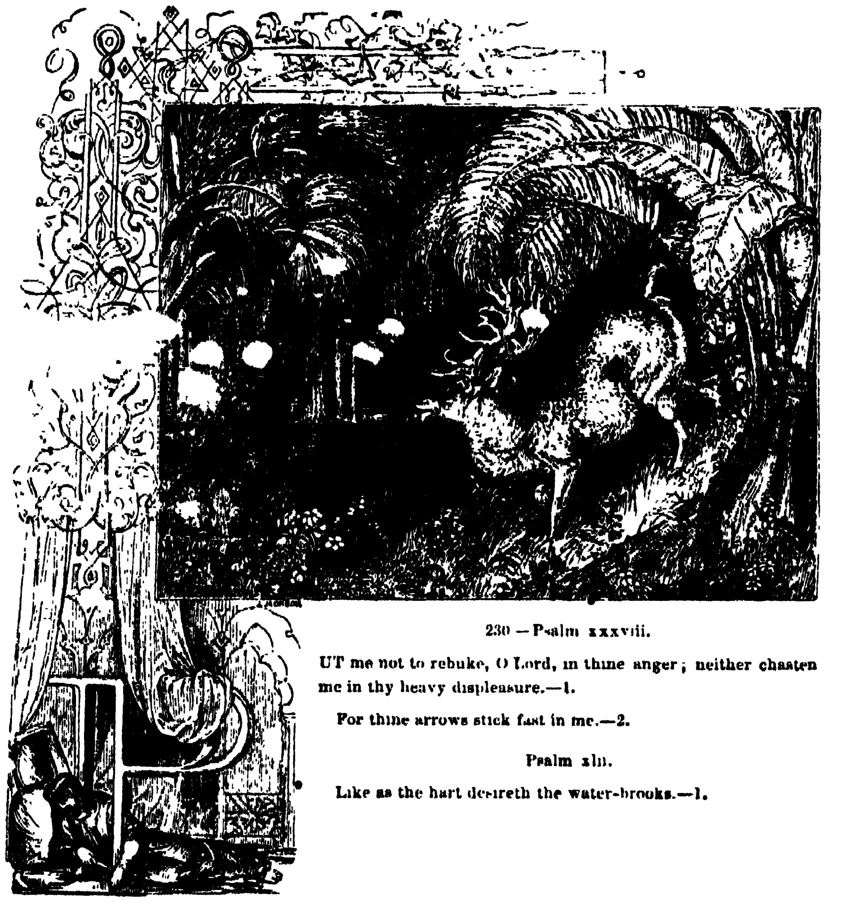
a, Telan Roegaidd; *b*, Telan Rufeinaidd, oddi wrth Fathodyn Nero; *c*, Telan Timotheus; *d*, Telan, oddi wrth sicl Iuddewig Simon Maccabeus; *e*, *e*, Telanau Rhufeinig; *f*, Ffurf a'r Modd o ddefnyddio'r Cyweirgorn.



227.—Grecian Trigonum.
Triongl yn Groegaidd.



231.—Psalm xxxix.



230.—Psalm xxxviii.

UT me not to rebuke, O Lord, in thine anger; neither chasten me in thy heavy displeasure.—1.

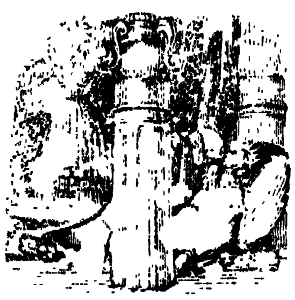
For thine arrows stick fast in me.—2.

Psalm xlii.

Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks.—1.



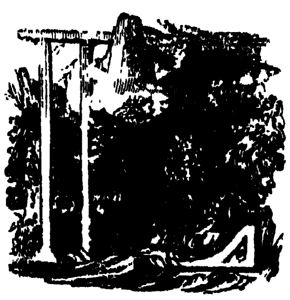
233.—Psalm xlii.



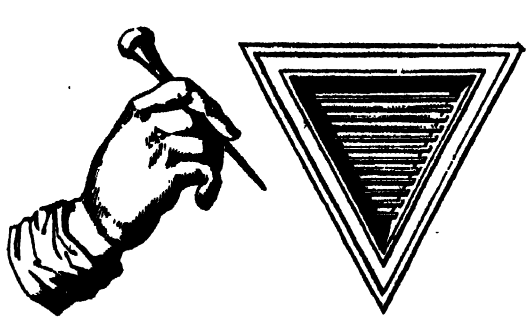
232.—Psalm x.



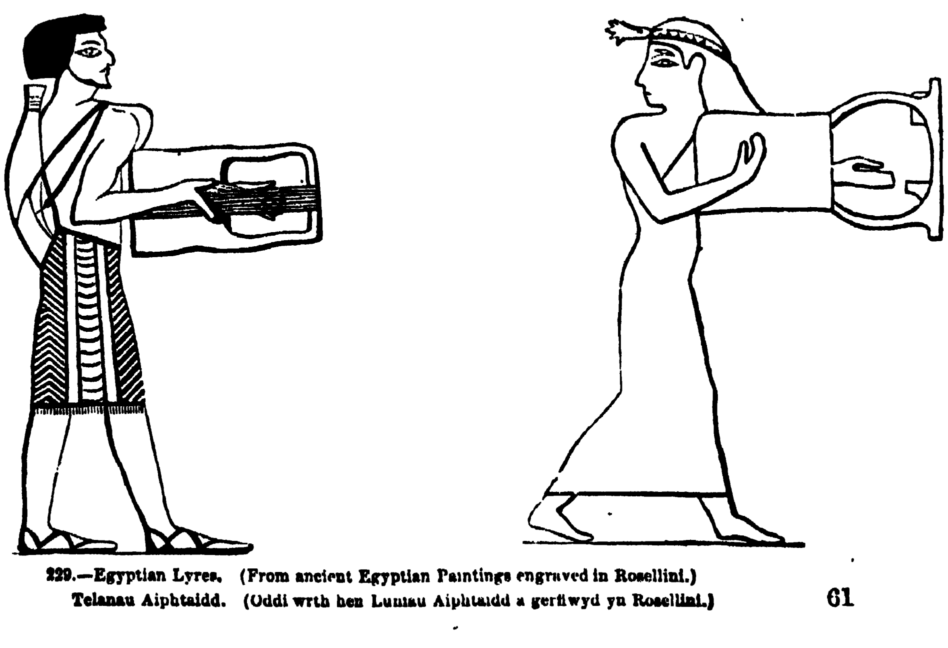
235.—Psalm xliii.



234.—Psalm xlii.



228.—Instrument and Plectrum.
Offeryn a Chyweirgorn.



229.—Egyptian Lyres. (From ancient Egyptian Paintings engraved in Rosellini.)
Telanau Aiphtaidd. (Oddi wrth hen Luniau Aiphtaidd a gerfiwyd yn Rosellini.)

kinnor acquired a very distinguished place in the musical establishment which David formed for the tabernacle, and, prospectively, for the temple. It is remarkable, indeed, that in the Law there are no regulations concerning music, except as to the blowing of horns and trumpets on stated occasions. As to David himself, his *kinnor* is so often mentioned, and he is so frequently described as playing on it, that we seem to have a sort of notion that he had this favourite instrument always at hand. Such, indeed, was the idea entertained by the Christian fathers, one of whom, Eusebius, says that David carried his lyre (so he calls it, and we doubt not correctly) with him, wherever he went, to console him in his afflictions, and to sing to it the praises of God. And, in his preface to the Psalms, he asserts that this prince, as head of the prophets, was generally in the tabernacle with his lyre, amidst the other prophets and singers; and that each of them prophesied, and sung his canticle as inspiration came upon him. Another intimation informs us that the frame of the *kinnor* was of wood; for we are told that Solomon 'made of the almug-trees harps (kinnoroth) also, and psalteries for singing' (1 Kings x. 12). It was the *kinnor* also which the captives at Babylon suspended upon the willows by the Euphrates; and from the Babylonians being desirous to hear them sing to the lyre their native songs, it would seem that the Hebrews had become noted not only for their music, but for their skill with this particular instrument."

On looking at the cuts which we offer, it will at once be perceived how strikingly these particulars coincide with and are illustrated by the ancient lyre, in at least some of the many forms which it bore. Among the various figures, there are but two, indeed, which make the slightest claim to be regarded as Jewish instruments, and the claim of these two has been much disputed. The first is the first of the Egyptian figures, copied from a painting which has been supposed to represent the arrival of Joseph's brethren in Egypt. If this conclusion could be implicitly relied upon, the lyre there represented may be regarded as the native instrument which the patriarchs brought with them into Egypt from the land of Canaan; it is rude and simple enough to have been such, and probably underwent some modifications and improvements before they quitted Egypt. Many very sound antiquarians believe that the scene from which this figure is taken actually does represent the Scriptural incident we have mentioned. Even those who demur at this, admit that the painting belongs to the age in which that incident occurred—and this admission renders the figure almost of equal value for the purpose for which it is here produced. The other supposed Jewish lyre is that represented in an alleged shekel of Simon Maccabæus. It is a most shapely and handsome instrument; but as the coin on which it is found, as well as the other alleged coins of the Maccabæan period, are of disputed origin, we are unable to place implicit confidence in the information which they seem to offer.

On the Egyptian monuments no lyre occurs exactly similar to that which is supposed to be the representation of a Jewish lyre by an Egyptian artist. The difference forms its distinctive character as a foreign instrument, for it is undoubtedly foreign, whether it be Jewish or not. Yet it will be seen that it does not greatly differ from the Egyptian instrument, and which is shown with the strings obliterated. They are the same in size, in power, and in the general form and principle of construction. In both alike the strings are stretched upon an open frame, and then prolonged over a hollow and sonorous body of wood. Several other lyres are found on the monuments, and although their shapes and ornaments are different, this is the principle in all of them. The Grecian fable respecting the origin of the lyre shows that this must have been the case with all the more ancient lyres, with which the weight of evidence would class the Hebrew *kinnor*. It is very remarkable also that this fable refers the origin of the lyre to the banks of the Nile, showing that the Greeks at least had their instrument from that quarter. It is thus related by the Athenian mythologist, Apollodorus:—"The Nile, after having overflowed the whole country of Egypt, when it returned within its natural bounds left on the shore a great number of animals of various kinds, and among the rest a tortoise, the flesh of which being dried and wasted by the sun, nothing remained but nerves and cartilages, and these, being braced and contracted by the drying heat, became sonorous. Mercury, walking along the banks of the river, happened to strike his foot against this shell, and was so pleased with the sound produced, that the idea of a lyre presented itself to his mind. He therefore constructed the instrument in the form of a tortoise, and strung it with the dried sinews of dead animals." Hence we observe that many of the Greek lyres have that tortoise-shape which this story would lead us to expect. The fable itself is, with some variation, related by Homer in his 'Hymn to Hermes.' The description of the primitive instrument is thus rendered by a modern poet:—

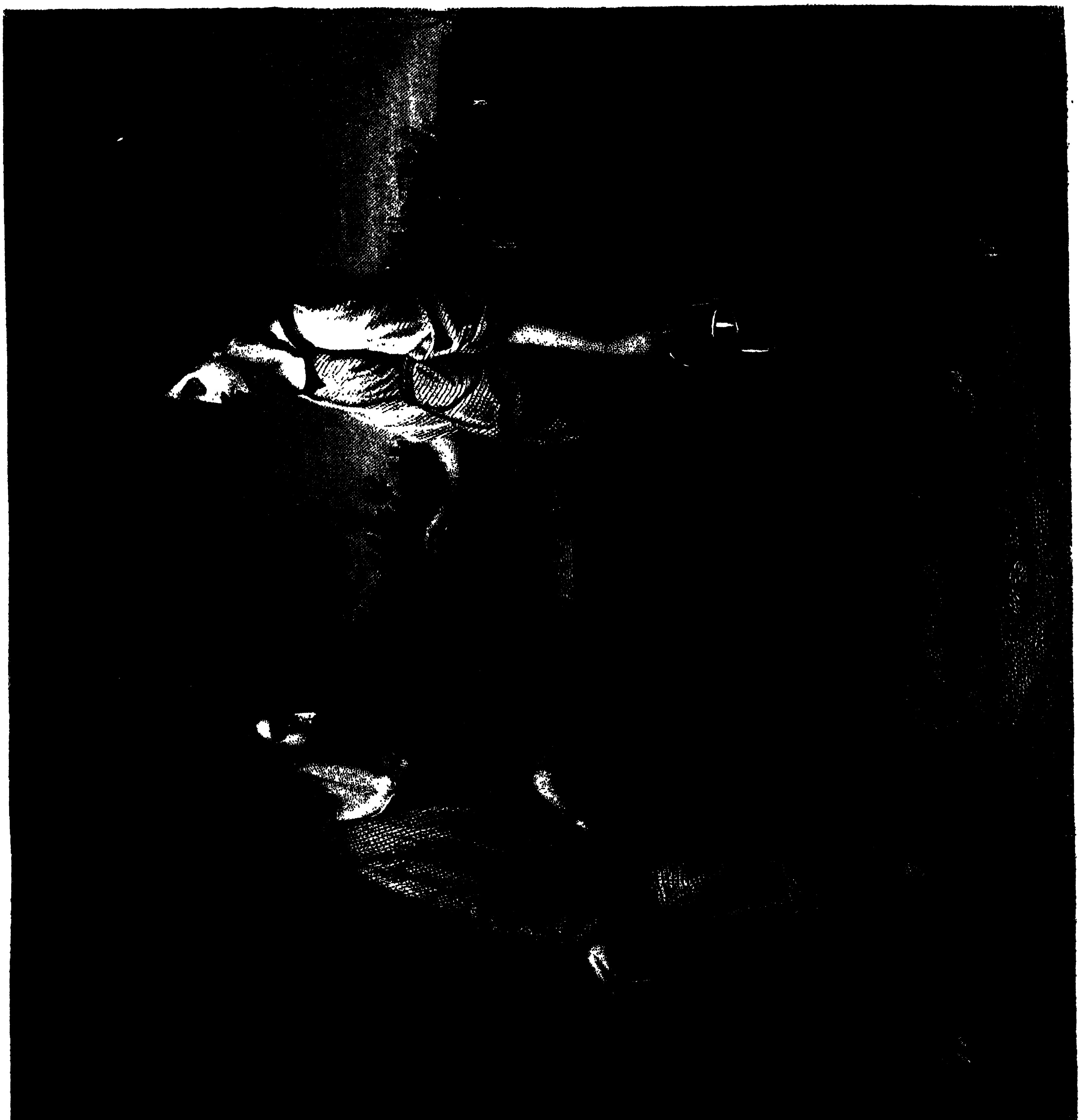
> "And through the stone-shelled tortoise's strong skin
> At proper distances small holes he made,
> And fastened the cut stems of reeds within
> And with a piece of leather overlaid
> The open space, and fixed the cubits in,
> Fitting the bridge to both, and stretched o'er all
> Symphonious chords of sheep-gut rhythmical.
> When he had wrought the lovely instrument,
> He tied the chords, and made division meet.
> Preluding with the plectrum, and there went
> Up from beneath his hands a tumult sweet
> Of mighty sounds, and from his lips he sent
> A strain of unpremeditated wit,
> Joyous and wild."

It may further illustrate this to remark that Hermes, or Mercury, to whom the invention of the lyre is thus ascribed, was himself of Egyptian origin, like many other of the gods of the Grecian mythology. So, Diodorus Siculus makes him one of the counsellors of Osiris in Egypt; and by this author he is said, among other useful things, "to have invented the lyre, furnishing it with three strings, in allusion to the seasons of the year. For these strings producing three different sounds, the grave, the mean, and the acute, he made the grave answer to winter, the mean to spring, and the acute to summer; and it is a well known fact that not only the Egyptians. but the Greeks, divided their year into not more than three seasons, spring, summer, and winter."

PSALTERY.—The instrument thus named in Psalm xxxiii. 2; lvii. 8; xcii. 3; and in other Psalms, was some sort of stringed instrument. The Hebrew word is *Nebel;* and our "Psaltery" is from the Greek translation of that word by ψαλτήριον. This instrument is first mentioned in 2 Sam. vi. 5, where it is described as being made (as well as the harp) of the wood of the fir-tree, of which the kinnor is also said to have been made; afterwards they were made out of the rarer Almug tree (1 Kings x. 12); and perhaps also, as Josephus alleges, of metal, unless the last is to be understood merely particular parts of the instrument. This must apply to the frame upon which the strings were extended. The number of strings seems to have been ten; but as Josephus names twelve, they were probably increased to that number. The instrument was employed in the services of religion in and after the time of David; but as it does not appear to have been used, like the kinnor, as a private instrument, the probability is that it was less portable and more costly. In many passages the "harp and psaltery are named together in such a manner as to show that they were of the same class of instruments, and not very different from each other in their use. Thus David seems to have employed almost indifferently the kinnor and the nebel, although the former is more frequently named as the instrument in which he excelled.

There has been so endless a variety of conjectures respecting the form of this instrument, that it is useless to repeat them. The best course is to take such tangible ideas as can be obtained, and see how far they can be associated with any ancient instrument. That it was a stringed instrument, and that the strings were numerous, we gather from Scripture; and that it was somewhat in the shape of the Greek Δ, we gather from the Christian fathers, who had the means of knowing at least to what instrument the Greek word which translates the Hebrew was applied. Following these hints, the editor of the 'Pictorial Bible' makes a collection of ancient Egyptian, Greek, and Roman instruments, of the triangular form thus indicated, and contends that they sufficiently answer all the conditions required for the Psaltery of the Scriptures. One of the Egyptian figures is not after a painting, but from an actual instrument found in one of the tombs, and now deposited in the Museum at Florence. In this, the strings, originally ten in number, form a triangle by their extension from the upper end of a stem inserted at right angles into a hollow body of wood. Portions of the strings still remain, and appear to have been formed from the intestines of animals. Remembering that Solomon obtained wood for his psalteries by distant commerce, it is worthy of note that the wood of this instrument is described by Rosellini as "a kind of mahogany (*swietana*) from the East Indies."

In inquiries of this nature we must be content when a strong probability is attained. The difficulty of obtaining a more precise identification of the Hebrew instruments of music has been felt by all writers who have turned their attention to the subject. But this difficulty is not surprising when we consider the many names which the Greeks had for their stringed instruments, and how the harps and lyres represented in the Egyptian sculptures approach each other in principle, so as often to render it doubtful to what class they should be referred.



SUNDAY VIII.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

THEREFORE, both as a woman and a Samaritan, this woman was astonished, and asked, "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a woman of Samaria?" Jesus answered, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Living water, means water from a perennial spring; and from the fact concerning the well which has just been pointed out, we are led to conclude that Jesus here intended an emphatic allusion to the circumstance that the well to which she had then come was *not* (as usually has been supposed) of living water, or at least not from an unfailing spring. The woman understood him literally, and answered accordingly: and when Jesus endeavoured to draw her attention to his deeper meaning, she still persisted in the literal understanding, by saying, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." Perceiving that she did not yet comprehend him, Our Lord changed the conversation, and, by intimating his knowledge of private circumstances of her life, which were discreditable, so wrought upon her, that she acknowledged him to be a prophet: but she hastened to change a topic so unpleasant to her, by reverting to the standing controversy between the Jews and Samaritans—the temple at Gerizim, and whether that or the one at Jerusalem "were the place where men ought to worship." Much astonished was the woman to find a topic which never failed to rouse a Jew, quietly set aside by the Divine Teacher with the remark, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither at this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father....God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." This was still a deep matter for the Samaritan woman, and she answered only by referring, as was the custom of the time, to the expected Messiah, for the solution of this and all other difficult and obscure matters. "I know," she said, "that Messias cometh; when he is come, *he* will tell us all things." Jesus answered, "I that speak unto thee am he!" Astonished, silenced, convinced, by this announcement, which cast a sudden and strong light upon all that she had not previously understood, the woman cared no more for her water-pot, but hastened away to the town, to make the glad tidings known to her friends and neighbours, to whom she cried, "Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?"

The disciples returned from the town before this conversation of Jesus with the woman of Samaria was quite concluded. For the reasons assigned, they were astonished to find him talking with a woman and a Samaritan; but they made no remark. They pressed him to partake of the food which they had brought; but he said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of;" and finding they understood him literally, he added, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

The intelligence of the woman brought a large number of the Samaritans from the town to the well. They pressed him to make some stay with them. This a mere Jew would have refused; but Jesus entered the town, and remained there two days, during which many of the Samaritans became believers in him as the Messiah promised to the Hebrew fathers (John iv. 1—42).

Jesus then pursued his journey into Galilee, where he began to preach his Gospel, to the effect of—"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent ye, and believe the Gospel." His proceedings at Jerusalem, and the undescribed miracles which he had there wrought, drew much attention to him on his return to Galilee; and the position of a public teacher, which he now assumed, soon spread his fame throughout that region, and he was for the time well received.

On again reaching Cana of Galilee, where his first miracle had been performed, an officer in the court of Herod Antipas, whose son was at the point of death, in Capernaum, came to implore him to proceed to that place, and restore his son to health. This application shows that the unspecified miracles of Christ at Jerusalem were of the same character as those which he afterwards performed. Jesus told him to return home, and he would find his son well. Believing this, he returned, and on the way was met by messengers who had been sent to inform him that his son was recovered. Finding that the fever had left his son at the very time that Jesus had said to him, "Thy son liveth," he and his became believers in Christ.

Jesus then proceeded to his own town of Nazareth, where he attended the synagogue on the Sabbath days.

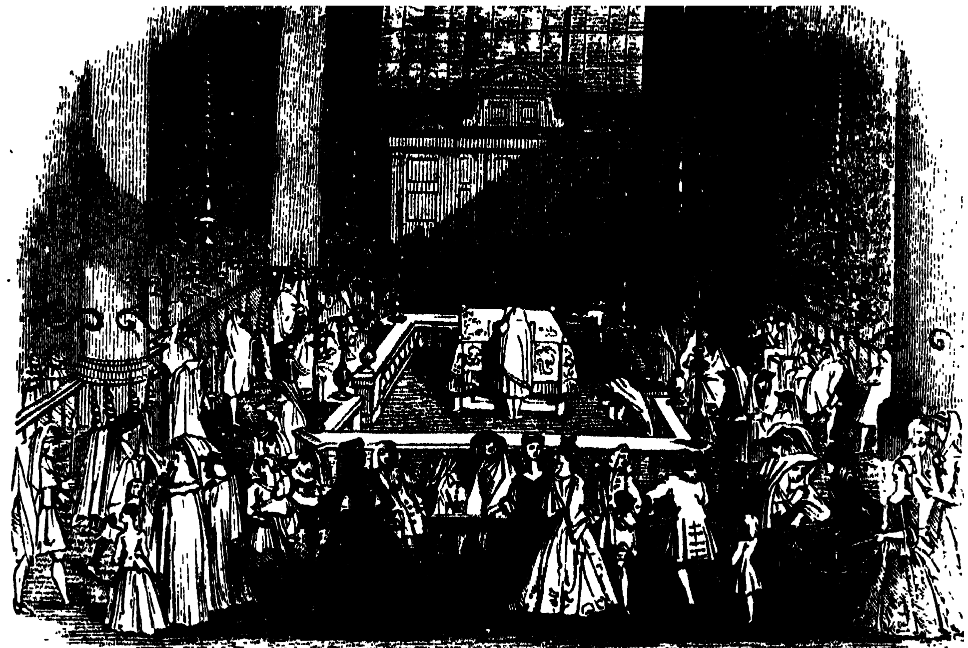
The synagogues were buildings in every town, in which the Jews assembled for public worship, and reading and expounding the Scriptures on the Sabbath days. In the time of Christ there was no town in Judea which had not one or more of these synagogues. Its affairs were managed by ten persons of property and influence, three of whom enjoyed a kind of superiority, and were called Rulers of the Synagogue. These formed a kind of magistracy for the decision of differences between the members of the congregation, for the maintenance of discipline, and for the proper ordering of the public worship. Each synagogue had a minister, whose duty it was to offer public prayer, and to exhort, if no one else undertook the duty. The reading of the Scriptures formed no part of his ordinary duty: but every Sabbath he called out seven of the congregation in succession to perform that service. He of course called forth only such as he knew or supposed capable of reading correctly. If a priest were present, he was first called, then a Levite, afterwards any persons on whom the minister might fix. The person called upon went to the desk or raised platform in the middle of the synagogue, and unrolled the volume till he came to the section he was to read; he read standing, and when he had finished, was at liberty to add any words of exhortation which he desired. This explains the proceeding of our Saviour in the synagogue at Nazareth. His re-appearance there was regarded with great interest by the congregation; and when "he stood up to read," the section for the day was a passage in Isaiah, which prophetically referred to himself (Isa. lxi. 1, 2). When he had read this, and returned the roll to the minister, he sat down, which was the posture in which the Jewish teachers addressed their audience. This, therefore, being a signal that he intended to speak, every one present watched with eager attention the words that fell from their townsman, whose fame was now so widely spread. The Scripture referred to the deeds of the Messiah, which were such as Jesus had actually performed in other places. When, therefore, he began by saying, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears," they were charmed with his words, expecting to see the same beneficial acts performed among themselves, which were wonderful things for "Joseph's son," as they called him, to do. This was not his intention; and but for that reason it should be said that he was not really the person to whom the prophecy applied, he proceeded to explain why this could not be. They looked upon him as the son of Joseph the carpenter, the relative of persons well known to them, and were little disposed to recognise in such an one, whom they had seen daily in their streets, the illustrious personage of whom the prophets had spoken. Therefore, because they despised him, because they would not see him in the character which he claimed—because in this, as in every other instance, "a prophet hath no honour in his own country," he would work no miracles among them, but would confer his benefits on others, of whatsoever country, who were desirous of his doctrine, and willing to receive his instructions.

Nothing was ever more calculated to exasperate the Jews than an implied or expressed preference of others. In this case the exasperation ran so high, that the congregation rose upon Jesus, and hurried him outside the city, to the brow of the hill on which it stood, with the intention of casting him down headlong: but he escaped from them, whether by miracle or not has been disputed, and proceeded to Capernaum.

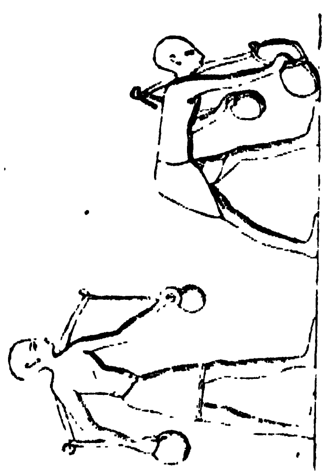
There are several perpendicular precipices, forty or fifty feet high, in the hills and around the present village; and one of these is doubtless that from which it was intended to cast Jesus down. That which is now known as the Mount of Precipitation is, however, nearly two miles south-east from the village. It is by no means likely that the excited mob would take their intended victim so far, to do that which there was equal facility for doing near at hand; and we may hence conclude that this precipice is pointed out merely because it makes a more striking object as seen from the plain of Esdraelon. Indeed, the intrinsic absurdity of this allocation is so great, that the monks in Nazareth feel the necessity of obviating objection by alleging that the city stood nearer to this precipice formerly than it does at present, but this assertion is against probability, and unsupported by any kind of proof.



236.—Christ and the Nobleman of Capernaum.
Crist a'r Pendefig o Capernaum.



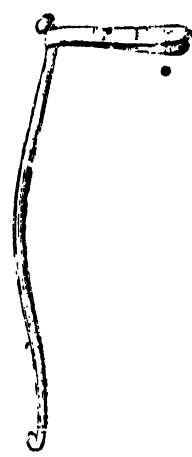
237.—Reading the Law in a Modern Jewish Synagogue. (From Picart's Religious Ceremonies.)
Darllen y Gyfraith mewn Synagog Iuddewig Diweddar. (O Picard's Religious Ceremonies.)



239.—Egyptian Water-bearers.
Dwfr-gludwyr Aiphtaidd.



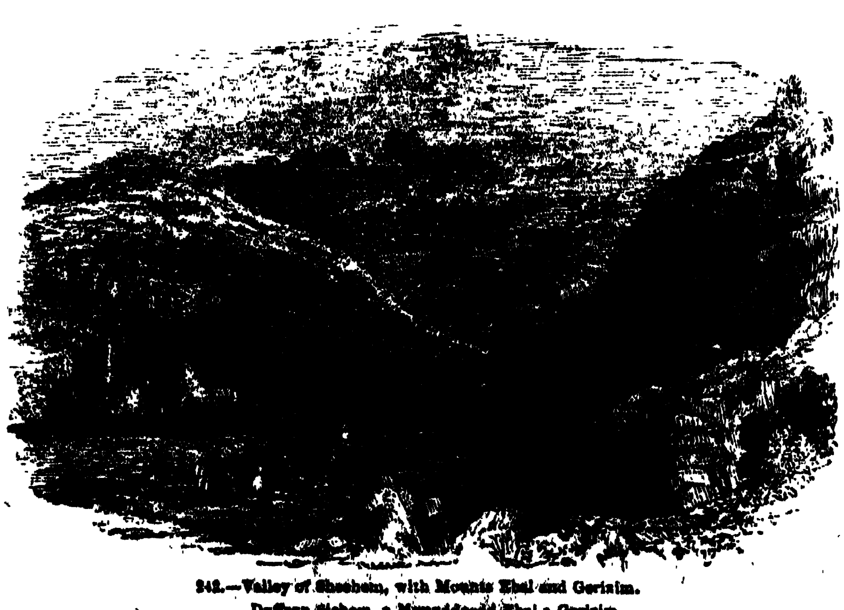
238.—Christ and the Woman of Samaria. (A. Caracci.)
Crist a'r Wraig o Samaria.



240.—Egyptian Yoke and Strap.
Iau a [illegible] Aiphtaidd.



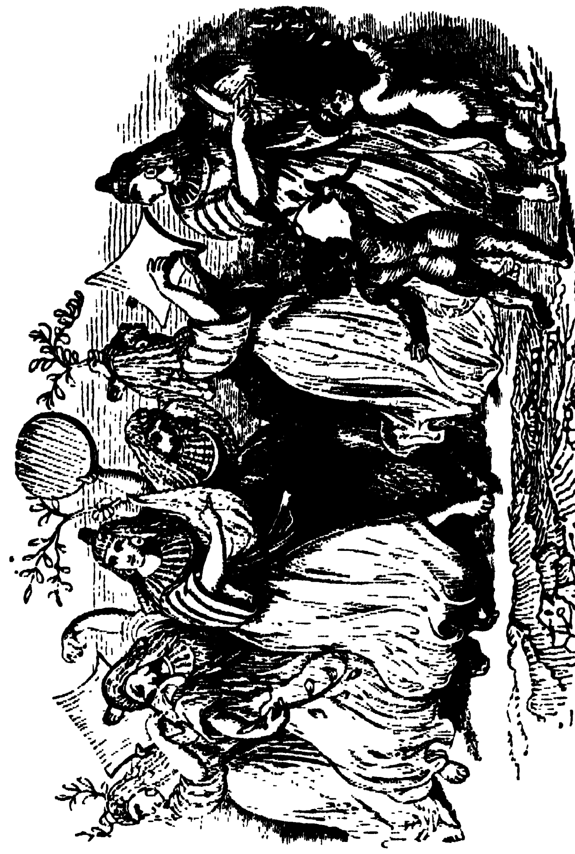
241.—Mount of Precipitation, near Nazareth.
Mynydd y Taflad Pendramwnwgl, ger llaw Nazareth.



242.—Valley of Shechem, with Mounts Ebal and Gerizim.
Dyffryn Sichem, a Mynyddoedd Ebal a Gerizim.



243.—Miriam celebrating the Deliverance of Israel. (Jordaens.)—Exod. xv.
Miriam yn Mawrygu Gwaredigaeth Israel.



244.—Dance of Females with Timbrels.
Dawns Benywod gyda Thympanau



245.—Ain Mousa.



246.—Wild Date-palm, found in the Sinai Mountains.—Exod. xv. 27.
Tal-balmwydden Wyllt, a ganfyddwyd ym Mynyddoedd Sinai.

SUNDAY IX.—BIBLE HISTORY.

SEVERAL wells of water are found at Ain Mousa (*the Fountain of Moses*), where we assume that the Israelites encamped after passing the sea (although this particular point is by no means necessary to the argument against the passage at Suez). Dr. Robinson counted seven; but some of them were mere recent excavations in the sand, in which a little brackish water was standing. Other of the wells are older and more abundant; but the water is dark-coloured and brackish, and deposits a hard substance as it rises, so that mounds have been formed around these larger springs, at the top of which the water flows out, and runs down for a few yards till it is lost in the sand. The Arabs call the northernmost of these springs sweet, but the traveller could not perceive that they differed much from the others. About twenty stunted and untrimmed palm-trees, or rather palm-bushes, grow around in the arid sand.

At this place (as we suppose) the Israelites remained some days, to refresh their spirits, and to gather the harvest of the deep, which was obtained from the costly spoils of the Egyptians whose bodies were washed to the shore.

After leaving the shore where they had crossed the sea, the emancipated Israelites proceeded on their journey towards the Sinai mountains, among whose solitudes they were destined to be organised as a nation, and to receive such training as was needful to fit them for the peculiar destinies which lay before them.

Their journey at first lay over "a desert region, sandy, gravelly, and stony alternately. On the right hand their eyes rested on the deep blue waters of the gulf so lately divided for their sake; while on their left hand lay the mountain-chains of Er-Ruhat, stretching away to a great distance as the pilgrims advanced. In about nine miles they would enter upon a boundless desert plain, now called El Ati, white and painfully glaring to the eye. Proceeding beyond this, the ground became hilly, with sand-hills near the coast" ('Pict. Hist. of Palestine,' p. 191). By the time they had traversed this region for three days, the water, which they had doubtless brought with them from Ain Mousa, became exhausted, and they hastened forward gladly to the well of Marah, which at length appeared to promise the water of which they stood so much in need. They found the water of this well too bitter to drink; and seeing no prospect of relief, they, who had all their lives been accustomed to drink their fill from the pleasant water of the Nile, quailed under this privation, and openly vented their discontent against Moses for having brought them into this miserable region. The well of Marah has been, since the time of Burckhardt, identified with the fountain of Hawarah, which is about thirty-three geographical miles from Ain Mousa, not too small a distance for a host so encumbered as that of the Israelites to take three days in traversing. The water of this fountain is of unpleasant taste, saltish, and somewhat bitter, and must have been intolerable to persons not yet accustomed to bad water. Moses was directed by the Lord to cast into the well the branches of a certain unnamed "tree," which grew near; and when he had done this, the water became fit for use.

Proceeding on their way, the country became more pleasant, and before them, as they advanced, the appearance of seventy palm-trees promised a supply of naturally good water, which is seldom absent where palm-trees grow. They were not disappointed, for twelve wells were found on the spot, which have the name of Elim. This is supposed to be the same with the present Wady Ghurundel. This is a valley, through which a torrent flows in winter. This valley is deeper and decked more profusely with trees and shrubs than any which the Israelites had yet passed. A few palm-trees are still found there, but tamarisks and acacias are more common. The fountains, lying above a mile out of the common route, are not visited by travellers, but water brought from them by attendant Arabs is, like all the water of this region, somewhat brackish, but much less unpleasant than that of Hawarah. This is still one of the regular watering-places of the Arabs. After leaving Elim, the Hebrews entered upon a more rugged country, called "the wilderness of Sinai, which is between Elim and Sinai." In this part of their route they had to pass through a plain or valley, formed by the roots of the El Tyh mountains on the left hand, and a chain of mountains which border the Red Sea on the right hand and shut out all view of and access to it. Having passed through this valley, the Hebrews came out again upon the shore of the Red Sea, and there encamped.

By this time a month had passed since the Hebrews had quitted Egypt, and the provisions which they had brought with them from that country were quite spent. This soon threw them upon their usual and most disgraceful complaints against Moses, and, by implication, against the God who had wrought such great wonders for their sakes. The abundance of Egypt rose before their minds, and they scrupled not to avow that the bondage, sweetened by the plenty, of that country, was, in their eyes, better than the glorious liberty, accompanied by privation, to which they had now attained. Yet while our indignation rises at the sight of a people so unworthy of, and so unable to appreciate, the freedom bestowed upon them, let us still remember that this enervation of soul was a natural and perhaps inevitable result of the enslaved condition in which this generation had been born and bred.

The answer to their murmurs was, the seemingly incredible promise that they should have meat to excess before the evening closed. Accordingly that very evening a wind arose, the direction of which brought to the camp an immense flight of quails, which, being weary, flew so heavily and low, that vast numbers of them were secured by the greedy Israelites, who were thus enabled to feed abundantly on a kind of game which was highly prized in Egypt.

Nor was this all, for when they arose the next morning the Israelites found the ground covered with an appearance like that of hoar frost, which, on examination, appeared to be composed of grains of a pearl colour and of the form and size of coriander seeds. They asked one another, "What is this?" (*Man-hu*), whence the name of Manna was given to this unknown substance. They were told that this was the "bread" with which they should henceforth be supplied every morning till the sources of natural supply from corn were open to them. Every family was directed to collect what it deemed an adequate supply; and those who collected more than enough, found their labour useless, as any portion which remained over the day corrupted and was spoiled. And yet, as if on purpose to evince the entirely miraculous nature of this provision, this quality of the manna was intermitted once in every week: for none of it fell on the Sabbath, but a double portion came and was gathered on the preceding day, and that which was not consumed on the first day continued fresh through the second. In the preparation for food this substance was dealt with like ordinary grain. It was reduced to meal by being ground in hand-mills or pounded in mortars, and it was then kneaded and baked in loaves and cakes after the usual manner. And yet, although thus prepared for food by baking, such of the manna as remained ungathered on the ground dissolved away daily in the heat of the sun. Eventually, also, a quantity of the manna was laid up in a golden pot in the holy place for a memorial; and, to answer the purpose of a memorial, it must have retained its original shape, although in the one instance it corrupted and in the other dissolved in a single day. Under these circumstances no one who receives the books of Moses as the truth of God can doubt that the manna, by which the Israelites were fed for forty years, was altogether miraculously supplied, or that the substance itself was altogether miraculous. Any attempt to explain this matter on natural grounds involves greater difficulties than the miracle itself. Thus, it has been atttempted to show that the manna was the exudation from certain trees (*Tamarix mannifera*) which grow sparingly in that region. But if the gummy distillation from these trees even did correspond to the description of the manna, how were the circumstances which constitute all that requires a miracle—how are these to be accounted for? Where, above all, shall we look for the interminable forests of manniferous trees which supplied two or three millions of people with daily and unfailing provision at all times of the year and in all their wanderings?

The manna seems to have had a sweetish taste, for the bread made from it is described as being similar to the finest corn bread made with honey or with oil.

In the leading narrative in Exodus, the next station, after the one distinguished by these memorable circumstances, is Rephidim. This is because that was the next station at which any remarkable circumstance occurred: for in the more minute list of stations given in Numbers xxxiii. we find two other stations, Dophkah and Alush, between "the desert of Sin" and Rephidim. It is worth while to mention this, because the occurrence of two intermediate stations somewhat breaks the surprise with which we find the Israelites giving way to another outbreak of murmuring and discontent at Rephidim. The cause was the want of water; and this time their discontent grew to such a height that they were almost ready to stone their great leader for having brought them out of the land of Egypt.

The usual appeal to the Lord was the only resource of Moses in this emergency. The Lord, still merciful and forbearing towards



his wayward people, delayed not to perform another signal miracle in their behalf. Moses was instructed to take with him certain elders of the people, and proceed up the valley till he came to a certain rock, which he was to smite with his rod. He did so: and immediately the smitten rock poured forth a stream of water, which flowed down the valley to the Hebrew camp, and furnished an abundant supply to all the host. Moses called that place MASSAH (*temptation*), because the Israelites there tempted God; and MERIBAH (*strife*), because of the contention which there arose.

The rock which Moses smote, and from which the water flowed, is pointed out to travellers in a narrow valley in the upper region of Sinai. It is a large isolated cube of coarse red granite, which appears to have fallen down from the eastern mountain. Down its front, in an oblique line from top to bottom, runs a seam of a finer texture, from twelve to fifteen inches broad, having in it several horizontal crevices, somewhat resembling the human mouth, one above another. These are said to be twelve in number, but Dr. Robinson could only make out ten. The seam extends quite through the rock, and is visible on the opposite or back side. The holes are usually said to be manifestly artificial, but did not appear to be so to this traveller, by whom they were particularly examined. They belong rather to the nature of the seam; yet it is probable that some of them may have been enlarged by artificial means. The rock is a singular one, and doubtless was selected on account of this very singularity as the scene of the miracle. There is no reason to suppose that this was really the rock from which the water flowed, but there is every possible reason to the contrary. In the 'Pictorial Bible,' under Exod. xvii., this subject is fully discussed: and it must be gratifying to the editor of that work to find that the conclusions at which he arrived, by a careful examination of all the evidence which then existed, have since, in every particular, been confirmed by the personal observations of Dr. Robinson. This could not be Rephidim, because it is in the very heart of the uppermost region of Sinai, where perennial springs abound, and no such supply could be needed: because there was no room for the hosts of Israel in the narrow valleys of this upper region: because when at Rephidim the Hebrews were still a day's journey from the Mount under which they finally encamped: and because the attack which was made upon the Israelites at Rephidim was scarcely possible in this upper region. The people who made that attack are known to have had a principal seat in the Wady Feiran, which lies on the outskirts of the more mountainous region. The position of this valley agrees with all the circumstances of the history, and it is here accordingly that the 'Pictorial Bible' and Dr. Robinson agree in seeking Rephidim.

Hitherto the Israelites had been unmolested by the inhabitants of the country they had entered, which seems to have been then, as at present, inhabited only by tribes of Bedouin or semi-Bedouin habits. To such a people the Hebrew host, weak by its very numbers, imperfectly organized, encumbered with women, children, old men, and flocks, and laden with valuable property, including the spoils of the Egyptians—must have seemed to offer an easy and valuable prey. The tribe which headed this attempt was that of the Amalekites, who had at least a temporary seat in the valley where the Hebrews lay encamped beside the waters which the smitten rock gave forth for their use.

It seems from Deut. xxv. 17, that the Amalekites had in the first instance fallen upon the weakest part of the host of Israel, when "faint and weary," and that it was this which induced Moses to order Joshua, a valiant young man who was attendant on his own person, to draw out a party of choice men against the following morning, and with them engage the Amalekites. This, being the first warlike action in which the Israelites were engaged, was to them no light matter; and, therefore, to encourage the young commander, Moses promised to stand on the top of the hill, in view of the warriors, with the rod of God in his hands.

The next morning, when Joshua went forth to engage the Amalekites, Moses proceeded to the hill-top, accompanied by his brother Aaron and by Hur; holding in his hand the rod with which such wonders had been wrought in Egypt and at the Red Sea. He held it up as an ensign, and from the sight of it the warring Israelites gathered confidence and strength; but when the weariness of the prophet's arm prevented him from holding it up longer, they became disheartened and gave way to the Amalekites. Perceiving this, the companions of Moses supported his arm, and the rod being no longer dropped, the Israelites prevailed till the Amalekites fled before them. The history of Israel records no resentment so implacable and deep as that with which this first assault upon them in the day of their weakness was regarded, and the two nations remained bitter enemies so long as the Amalekites continued to exist as a distinct people.

The Israelites were much encouraged by this success of their first martial enterprise. The circumstances were, by the Divine command, recorded in a book, in which also a direful remembrance against Amalek was written down. Moses also erected an altar whereon to offer sacrifices of thankfulness, and in memorial of the victory: and he gave it the name of JEHOVAH-NISSI (*the Lord is my Banner*), in allusion to the lifting up of the rod upon the hill.

Before they quitted this place, Jethro, with whom Moses had lived so many long years in Midian, came to visit his now illustrious son-in-law, whose wife and sons he brought with him. This must have been a great satisfaction to Moses. He gave Jethro an account of all the wonders which the Lord had done for his people, and of all the kindness he had shown them: whereat, the pious old man gave praise to God, and in his priestly character offered solemn sacrifices of adoration, in which act Moses, Aaron (who was not yet a priest), and the elders of Israel joined: and they then feasted together.

Great as Moses was, in all that constitutes true greatness in man, he was not above taking hints from the experience of the aged Jethro, for the better government of the nation now under his guidance. Observing that Moses sat all day long administering justice among the people, the old sheikh strongly censured this waste of strength, and advised him to appoint inferior magistrates, in a gradually ascending scale, who should hear and determine all ordinary causes, and only refer matters of great difficulty, and in the last resort, to him. Moses saw the excellence of this advice, and, after obtaining the Divine sanction, proceeded to put it in execution, to the great comfort of himself and the people. Having seen this matter settled to his satisfaction, Jethro took his leave, and returned to his own land.

The Israelites appear to have remained about a month at Rephidim, they then departed; and in about three months from their quitting Egypt, reached the mount where the Lord had first appeared to Moses, and encamped before it. For an account of this region the reader is referred to the chapter on MOUNTAINS in the geographical portion of the present work. This was the place where the descendants of Abraham were to receive the laws and instructions necessary to fit them for the peculiar position which they were to occupy among the nations of the world.

The instructions through which the Israelites were to be moulded into a peculiar nation, commenced by Moses being called up into the mountain to receive the Divine communications. Here the leading principle of the great compact between the Lord and his people was opened to him, and he was required to return and demand the formal assent of the people to it. The principle was this:—the people on their part were required to forsake every false way—the ways of idolatry; and to worship, fear, and serve Jehovah only: and then He, on his part, would become, in a peculiar sense, *their* God—theirs by especial covenant: and not only their God, but their political Head, their King, dwelling among them by manifest symbols of presence, and directing their public affairs by oracles delivered to appointed ministers, by which they would become eminently *his* people, a priestly kingdom, and a holy nation. The people having solemnly accepted this covenant, the Lord then announced his intention, as their king, to issue a code of laws for their government; the fundamental principles of which he would publicly deliver in the audience of all the people. This was done in order to authenticate the further communications to be made through Moses alone, and to make the people sensible that it was more expedient for them that the divine commands should be imparted to them through him than by more direct communication. Not that God, who is a Spirit, purposed to make himself visible to the people. No: they should behold the veil only which hid the glory of his presence—the thick clouds darkening upon the mountain, and a voice issuing from the midst of them.

But before the Israelites could formally appear in the presence of the Lord, it was needful that they should be purified. Two days were given them to make their garments and their persons clean, and on the third they were to stand before the mountain and receive the divine commands. But the presence of God upon the mountain would render it a most holy place, which feet unconsecrated might not tread: therefore bounds were set around the base of the mountain, beyond which no one, under pain of death, might pass.

At length the great day arrived. The people stood in solemn expectation around the mountain, which was already enveloped in thick clouds, which shot forth vivid lightnings, and uttered mighty thunderings. At length the sound of angelic trumpets announced the coming Presence. God descended in fire, and the mountain quaked beneath his feet; while the face of the mount was enveloped in flame and smoke.



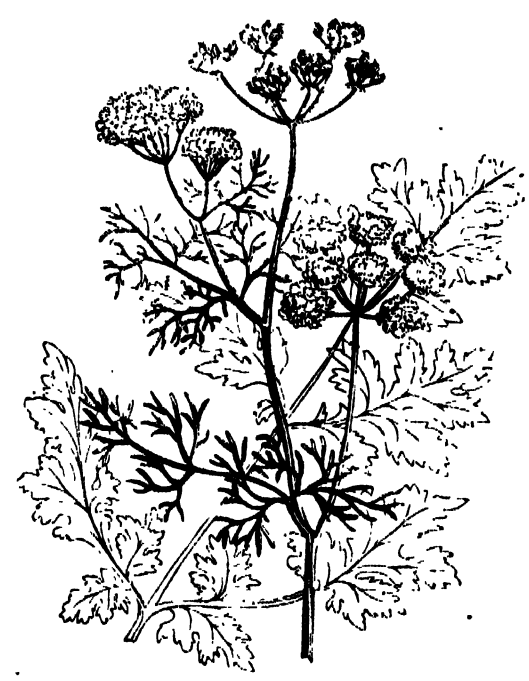
247.—Rock of Moses.—Exod. xvii.
Craig Moses.



251.—Pounding in a Mortar.
Pwyo mewn Mortar.



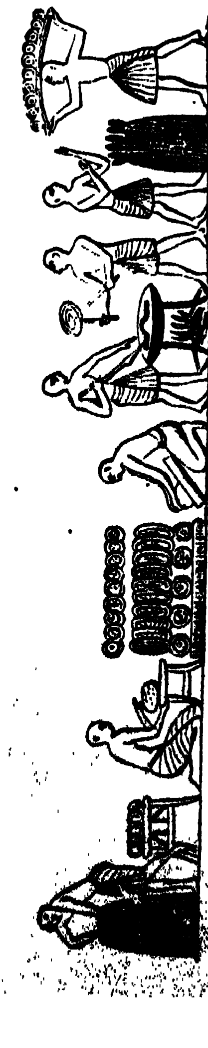
248.—Gathering the Manna. (Poussin.)—Exod. xvi.
Casglu'r Manna.



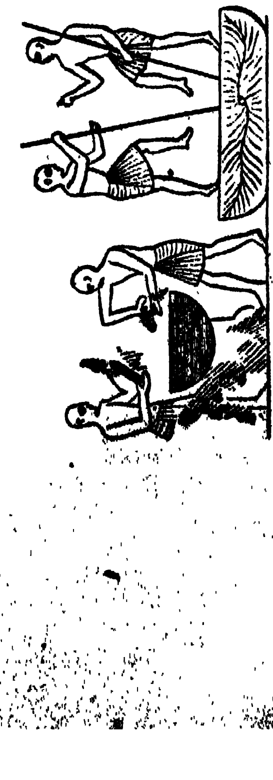
250.—Coriander.—Exod. xvi.



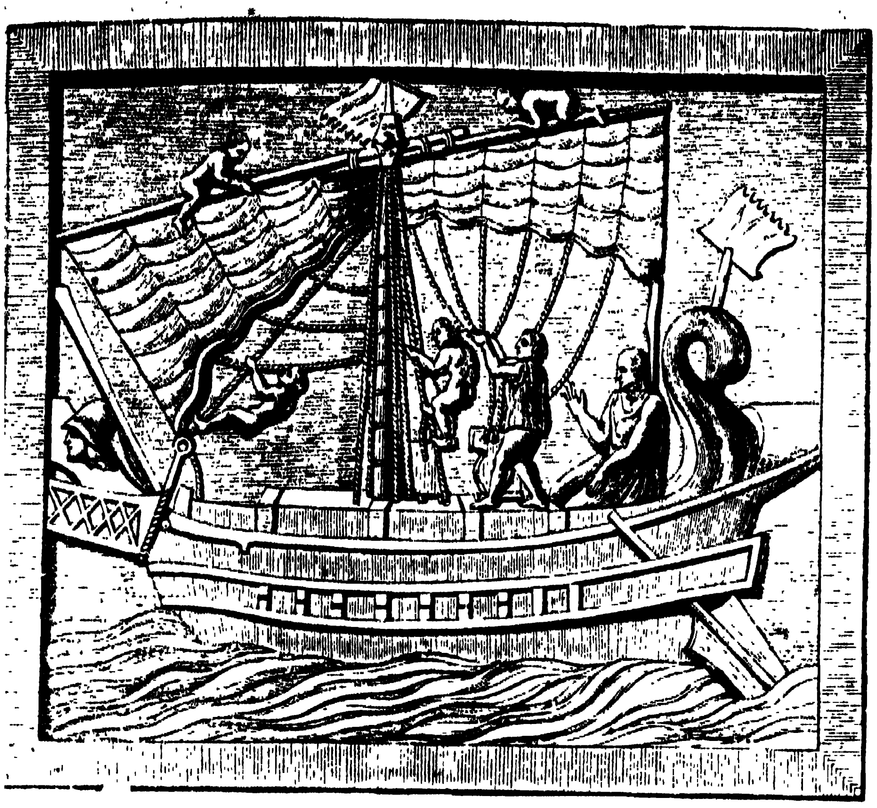
249.—Wilderness of Sin.—Exod. xvi.
Anialwch Sin.



252.—Baking.
Pobi.



253.—Kneading.
Tylino.



254.—Boat on a Tomb at Pompeii.
Cwch ar Feddrod yn Pompeii.

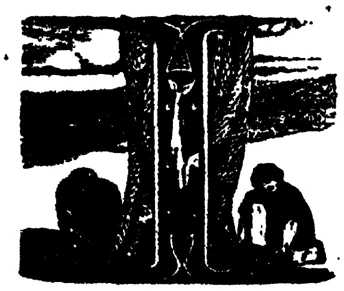


255.—Miraculous Draught of Fishes. (Rubens.)
Yr Helfa Wyrthiol o Bysgod.



256.—The Miraculous Draught of Fishes. (Raffaelle's Cartoon.)
Yr Helfa Wyrthiol o Bysgod.

SUNDAY IX.—LIFE OF CHRIST.



IN Capernaum, to which our Lord now proceeded, he henceforth usually resided when in Galilee. Often as this place is mentioned in the New Testament, there yet occurs no specification of its local situation, except the somewhat indefinite intimation that it lay upon the sea-coast (*i. e.*, the Sea of Tiberias), upon the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim (Matt. iv. 13). It must therefore have lain on the western shore of the lake, and some incidental notices in the Gospels enable us to collect that it lay in that part of the western shore known as the region of Gennesareth, which was a fertile plain down upon the shore, below the mountains which on that side form the basin of the lake. This small plain occurs in about the mid-distance between the town of Tiberias and the northern extremity of the lake, and is contained within a triangular expansion of the shore from the backward bending of the mountains. Capernaum was evidently a place of some importance in the time of Christ; but all trace of it has long since disappeared, and the very site which it occupied has become uncertain. In this we may find a striking fulfilment of our Lord's denunciation: "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained unto this day" (Matt. xi. 23).

The brothers Peter and Andrew, and the brothers John and James, who had formerly acknowledged the divine mission of Christ, were fishermen of the Lake of Tiberias, and as they had not been called to a constant attendance upon the person of Jesus, they had returned to the occupation by which they earned their livelihood. They were partners together in the same concern; that is to say, they went out fishing together in their respective fishing-smacks, and shared together the produce of their toil.

The prophet of Nazareth failed not to attract attention when he came to Capernaum; he was followed by crowds of persons, who wished to hear his new and startling style of teaching. One day, as he walked along the shore of the lake, he was thus attended, and, being incommoded by the pressure, he went into Peter's fishing-boat, which happened to be on the shore, and desired him to thrust the vessel out somewhat from the brink, that he might the more conveniently address the people, when he was thus separated from them and raised above them.

When he had finished, he turned to the friendly fishermen, and said, "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." Peter, as an experienced fisherman, slightly demurred at this. "Master," he said, "we have toiled all the night, and taken nothing." If, therefore, they had taken nothing during the night (the proper time for fishing), it seemed hopeless to cast the net in the day-time, in the sight of the fish, and in comparatively shallow water. But although this consideration was present to the mind of Peter, it did not prevent him from adding—"Nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net." And richly was this faith rewarded. The men who had toiled all the night and caught nothing, now enclosed so many fish that their net began to break, and they had to summon their partners in the other boat to their assistance.

Peter's previous hesitation makes us the better appreciate the amazement with which he was filled by this event. A landsman might not so readily have apprehended the full force of all the bearings of this miracle; and Peter himself had been less astonished to see Christ heal the sick—perhaps from a notion, common among the Jews, that the prayers of holy men accompanied by imposition of hands might have power to heal diseases and to cast out evil spirits. But here was a miracle more distinctly addressed to his own perceptions, and which assured him that Jesus of Nazereth held dominion over the sea and its inhabitants. He could not but conceive that there was some peculiar presence of God with a person who could perform a miracle like this; and the consciousness of sin made him fear to appear in the presence of such a one, lest some infirmity or offence should expose him to more than ordinary punishments. When, therefore, he perceived that the fish which had been taken at this draught, filled both the boats to that degree that they began to sink, he fell down at the feet of Jesus, crying "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." But the Lord encouraged him and Andrew, whose sentiments he expressed, by saying, "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of MEN." They understood this conventional formula of "Come after me," or "Follow me," as a summons to exclusive attendance upon him henceforth, and, accordingly, they had no sooner landed than they abandoned all their fishing concerns and followed him. John and James appear to have hastened to the shore with their fish and nets in the other vessel, and had not heard this call, though they shared in the feelings which produced it. When, however, Christ had landed with Peter and Andrew, and proceeded a little way along the shore, he beheld them busily engaged with their father Zebedee in mending the broken nets. He called to them "Follow me," and they immediately arose and followed him, leaving their father in the boat with the hired servants. (Compare Luke v. 1—10; Matt. iv. 18—22; Mark i. 16—20.)

During his residence at Capernaum, Jesus followed his usual practice, and taught in the synagogue on the Sabbath-day. It may be remarked that he was not now in his native place, where he might be supposed to have had more facilities in this respect, according to the rules of the synagogues. But the fact is, that the Jews in their synagogues were always desirous of hearing any stranger who had taken the character of a public teacher, or who seemed to have any wish to address them, and hence when such persons happened to be present, they were usually called upon by the minister of the synagogue. We see an instance of this in Acts xiii. 15. Thus it was that at Capernaum and other places, Jesus found frequent opportunities of "teaching in the synagogues."

When Christ taught in the synagogue at Capernaum, the people were astonished at his doctrine, "for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes." By this we understand, that he taught not as a commentator on the law of Moses, and on the traditions of the fathers; but as a prophet greater than Moses, come with a new law and a new doctrine, and not bound by the literal obligations of a covenant completed and finished by his own appearance on the earth. Well might they, who regarded the law and the traditions as the eternal counsel of God, be "astonished" at the new doctrine which Jesus taught.

Among those present, as he taught in the synagogue at Capernaum, was "a man with an unclean spirit." He also was wrought upon by that which he heard, and he cried out in the name of the demons who tormented him, or the demons cried through him in their own name (for the matter is disputed), "Let us alone: what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee, who thou art: the Holy One of God." But Jesus now and on other occasions declined to avail himself of such testimony, and rather endeavoured to suppress it; so now he said, "Hold thy peace, and come out of him." But although forbidden to speak, piercing cries attested the agony of the man, under the strong convulsions by which he was rent as the evil spirit departed from him. The people were astonished beyond measure at this transaction. With the phenomenon of such demoniacal possession they were indeed well acquainted, and the process of cure followed by the Jewish exorcists was known to them. It was the point of difference in action which struck them. It was "the *authority* with which he spake," it was "the new doctrine," that confounded them. The Jewish exorcists used invocations in the Divine name to dislodge the demons; but no one had ever done this thing in his own name until now. It requires larger considerations than this place admits, to show, from the peculiar notions entertained by the Jewish people, how strikingly calculated this act of Jesus was to arrest attention and excite astonishment. But those who are already acquainted with those notions, feel no surprise in learning that "immediately his fame spread abroad through all the region round about Galilee" (Mark i. 21—28).

Christ appears to have lodged in the house of Peter during his stay at Capernaum; at least he proceeded thither on leaving the synagogue. The marvellous cure just performed caused some one to mention that Peter's mother-in-law was in the house, lying dangerously ill of a fever. On hearing this, Jesus went to her, and as he took her by the hand to lift her up, the fever departed from her, and she arose from her bed and attended upon him.

The fame of these miracles of healing spread rapidly through the city, and excited new remembrances and new hopes of health and strength, in all the incurables of the place. How impatiently they waited till the setting of the sun ended the Sabbath, and enabled their friends to take them to the prophet, by whose hands such deeds of mercy had been wrought! In the evening, therefore, crowds of diseased persons were assembled before the door of Peter's house. Jesus came forth to them, healed them all by his word, and sent them rejoicing home. Then, as the Evangelist remarks, was ful-

filled that saying of the prophet Isaiah—"Himself took our infirmities and bare our sickness" (Matt. viii. 14—17; Mark i. 31—34).

The next morning, Jesus rose "a great while before day," and withdrew privately to a solitary place, that he might indulge in prayer and meditation undisturbed by the crowds which now attended his steps. Peter and his companions soon came to him there, and apprised him of the multitudes which sought for him, and awaited his appearance at Capernaum. This decided him not to return thither. The fact of the attention which had been drawn to him, sufficed to show that he had already borne sufficient testimony to the new doctrine in that city, and that it now behoved him to declare the will of God, and bear similar testimony in other places also. He therefore said: "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth."

The renown of his preaching and miracles had by this time spread throughout Syria, and multitudes followed him, or gathered around him wherever he went. Many persons came from the remotest parts of the land to hear and see him—even from Jerusalem and Judea, and from the country beyond the Jordan. Those who know what throngs of diseased persons, at this day, in the East, gather around any stranger who is supposed or rumoured to possess medicines, or to be gifted with unusual powers of healing, and with what urgent importunities and cries they appeal to him for relief, may form some notion of the crowds of diseased persons who would and did gather to one whose word, whose touch, whose look, had power to drive away every kind of sickness and disease. Then, and constantly during our Lord's sojourning upon earth, were accomplished the prophecies which our poet has so beautifully embodied:—

> "The Saviour comes! by ancient bards foretold:
> Hear him, ye deaf; and all ye blind behold!
> He from thick films shall clear the visual ray,
> And on the sightless eye-ball pour the day.
> 'T is he the obstructed paths of sound shall clear,
> And bid new music charm the unfolding ear;
> The dumb shall sing, the lame his crutch forego,
> And leap exulting like the bounding roe."

Of all the miraculous cures which were effected during this journey, only one has been selected by the Evangelists for particular notice: this was the cure of a leper.

Leprosy was a cutaneous disorder to which the ancient nations appear to have been much subject, and which was so common even in Europe during the middle ages, that numerous hospitals, or rather "lazar-houses," were established for their reception. The disease, in at least one of its most usual forms, imparted an unearthly pallor to the complexion, whence, when Gehazi was punished with the leprosy of which Naaman had been cured, he is said to have gone forth from his master's presence "a leper as white as snow" (2 Kings v. 27). The disease was deemed incurable by medicine; it was certainly contagious, and was even believed to be hereditary. Lepers were hence compelled to live in a state of separation outside the towns by the laws of Moses (Lev. xiii. 46), and so rigidly was this law enforced, without respect of persons, that the sister of Moses and Aaron, when smitten with leprosy, was put out of the camp (Num. xii. 15); and King Uzziah, when visited with a similar affliction, was compelled to relinquish the government, and live secluded in a separate house (2 Kings xv. 5).

The dread of this disease and of the disabilities connected with it was so great, that still further precautions were judged necessary to prevent contamination by accidental or unknowing contact with lepers. They were compelled to wear their dress in such a manner as sufficiently distinguished them even at a distance. His outer garment was rent open in front, his head bare, and his lip was to be covered either with his hand or the skirt of his garment. Nor was this all, for it was his bounden duty, by cries of "Unclean! Unclean!" to give warning of his presence to those who might happen to be near him. These latter precautions were found so effectual, that, although lepers resided outside the towns, they were allowed to enter them in the day-time, and to appear in the streets and public places.

As this state of the leper was one into which no one would willingly enter, it may easily be supposed that persons were not brought into it without some kind of legal process or examination. The fact is, that when a person was suspected of being afflicted with leprosy, it became the interest of all his friends and neighbours to have the fact determined, as they might all be subjected to unpleasant consequences by continued intercourse with him. He was, therefore, taken before the priest, whose business it was to be qualified, under certain rules laid down by the law, to distinguish true leprosy from any disorder which might appear like it; and if it were a real leprosy, the priest pronounced the man unclean, and he went into separation. And from this condition no one could be relieved but by the same sanction. If a leper believed himself healed, he was to go before the priest, who examined him, and pronounced whether he were really cured or not. If it were so, the man then underwent the ceremonies of purification, which are minutely described in Levit. xiv. These chiefly consisted in the slaughter of one of two birds which had been brought for the purpose, and the sprinkling of the person with its blood after the body had been burned. The other bird was set free, either to signify that the leprosy had departed, or, as others allege, to indicate the man's restoration to the free intercourse of society in life. This restoration did not, however, take place all at once. The man remained apart both from lepers and from clean persons for a week after the purification; and he then again presented himself before the priest, when, if no symptom of leprosy had re-appeared, he presented a sacrifice, and all restraint was withdrawn from him.

Under these circumstances we can have no difficulty in understanding how fervently a leper would desire to be relieved from his miserable condition, and considering the usually incurable nature of the disease, we can the better appreciate the strength of faith manifested by the leper who fell down before Christ, and besought him, saying, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean!" The Saviour of men was touched with compassion. He put forth his hand and touched him, saying, "I will: be thou clean;" and immediately the man's leprosy departed from him. Jesus then charged him not to declare the manner of his cure, but to go and show himself to the priest in the usual course. This was indeed necessary to restore the man to his civil privileges; but in this case it had also the effect of rendering the inspection of the priest instrumental in authenticating the miracle. The man, however, was unable to control the expression of his wonder and gratitude. He published the matter wherever he went, and such was the effect that Christ was unable to enter any town openly, on account of the crowds which beset his path.

Jesus returned to Capernaum, where diseased persons continued to be brought to him, and large numbers of people from different parts of the country attended his instructions. He was once teaching in a house so crowded with auditors, even to the door, that all means of access were cut off. Here a man entirely laid up with palsy was brought to be cured by Jesus; and when his bearers found that they could not in any other way bring him before Christ, they took him to the top of the house, and slung him down through the tiling, in his bed, to the feet of Jesus. This transaction appears somewhat difficult, owing to the great difference between the construction of Eastern houses and of our own. A little explanation will make it clear. The houses have flat roofs, protected by a rail or parapet, and forming a fine terrace, to which the people resort for air and exercise, and where they sleep during the nights of summer. There is usually a flight of steps near the door, and another in the interior part of the house communicating with the roof. If the bearers of the palsied man could not get access to the door, they doubtless carried him to the roof of a neighbouring house, and then passed him over the separating parapet to the roof of that house in which Christ was.

The buildings of an Eastern house form one or more sides of an interior court or quadrangle. The ground floor is usually occupied by offices; the first floor is fronted by a covered gallery, into which all the principal apartments of the house open. If there be a second story, there is a similar gallery to it. Now the nature of the operation performed by the persons in charge of the paralytic depends entirely upon the position which Christ at that time occupied. He was not in the court preaching to the people there; because in that case it would not have been needful to remove any tiling in order to let the sick man down to him. Neither was he in a room, as is usually interpreted, for that would have necessitated the removal or opening of the roof; and this, from the materials of which the roofs are composed, and from the manner of their construction, would not only have been a work of much time and labour, but would have filled the room below with dust and rubbish. It only, therefore, remains to conclude that Christ was in the gallery, surrounded by the principal persons and by his own disciples, and thence addressed the people assembled in the court below. This was not only the position likely to be taken by any person desirous of being heard by the largest number of persons, but the one which best agrees with all the circumstances of the case. The bearers of the paralytic man had, then, only to remove the covering or penthouse of the gallery, which is usually formed of shingles or other materials easy removed, and to let the sick man down before Jesus, who sat there.



257.—Peter, James, and John. (Caravaggio.)
Pedr, Iago, ac Ioan.



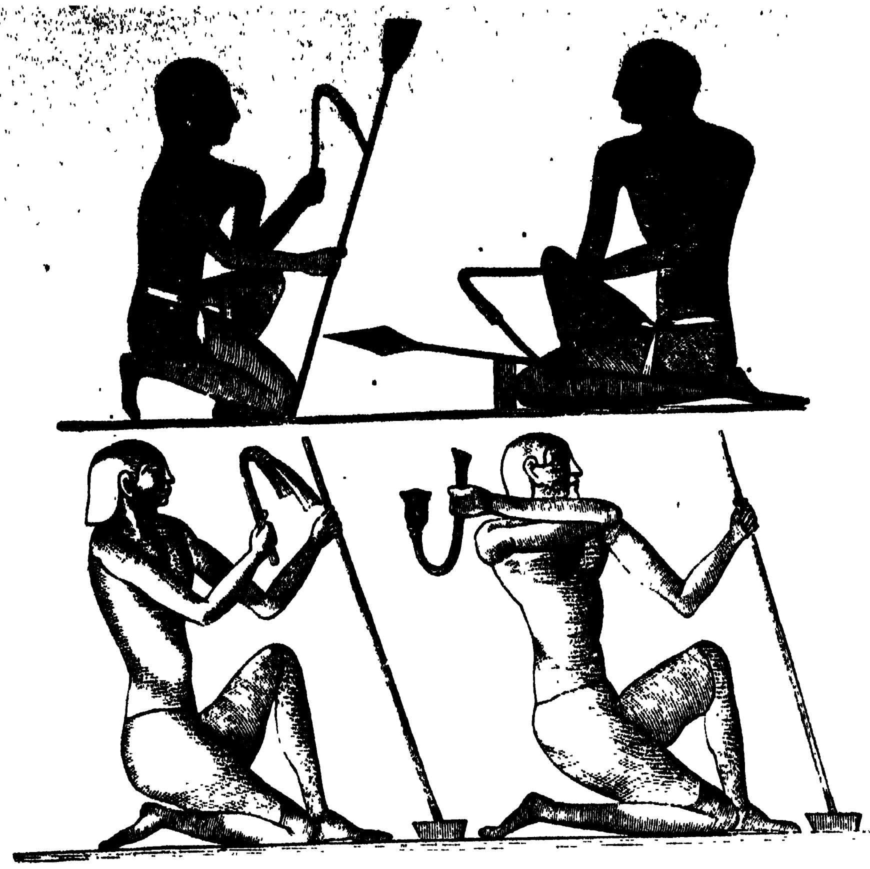
258.—Christ cureth the Leper.
Crist yn iachâu y Gwahanglwyfus.



259.—Christ cureth the Sick of the Palsy.
Crist yn iachâu y Claf o'r Parlys.



260.—Lake of Gennesareth, with the Town of Tiberias.
Llyn Gennesaret, a Thref Tiberias.



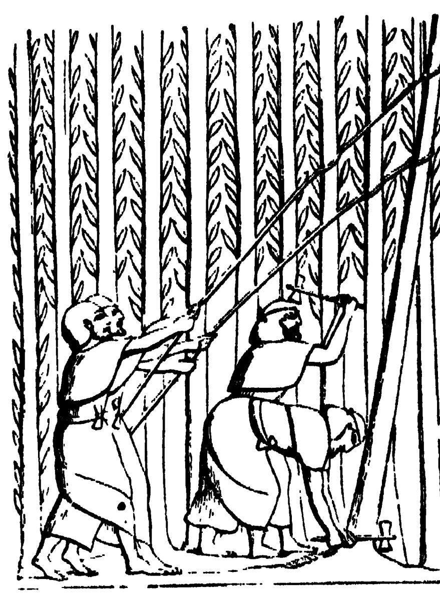
262.—Egyptians manufacturing Spears.
Aiphtiaid yn gwneuthur Gwaywffyn.



265.—Painting an Idol.—Isa. xliv.
Paentio Eilun.



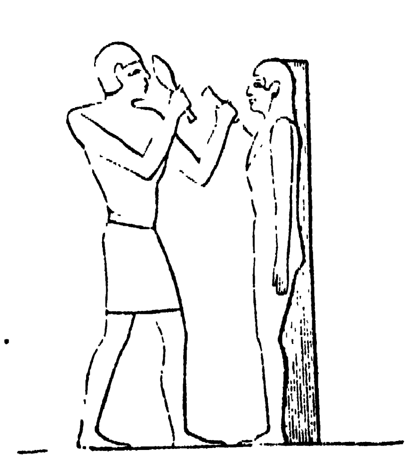
263 - Ancient Egyptian Sculptors blocking out Stone for the formation of an Idol.—Isa. xliv.
Hen Gerfwyr Aiphtaidd yn llunio Maen i wneud Eilun.



261.—Felling Trees in Lebanon.
Cymmynu Coed yn Libanus.



266.—Graven Images of Babylon.—Isa. xliv.
Delwau Cerfiedig Babilon.



264.—Isa. xliv.
Esa. xliv.

SUNDAY X.—THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

ISAIAH XXXV.—L.

IN the Sacred Scriptures—and in Isaiah especially—there are many derisive allusions to the fabrication of idols. None of these allusions are more pointed, and in a certain degree descriptive, than the one in Isaiah xliv. 12—19, which, but for its length, we should like to transcribe in this place. The essential or descriptive part is thus given in Dr. Henderson's version:—

"The smith prepareth an axe and worketh in the coals,
He fashioneth it with hammers and worketh it with his
powerful arm;
He becometh hungry and has no strength;
He drinketh no water and is faint.
The carpenter stretcheth out the line,
He sketcheth its figure with a sharp tool;
He worketh it with chisels;
He marketh it off with the compass;
He maketh it into human shape,
After the beauty of a man,
To dwell in a house.
He heweth down cedars for himself;
He taketh the ilex and the oak,
And what he deemeth firm among the trees of the forest:
He planteth the pine, and the rain nourisheth it."

He then goes on to describe the uses to which the wood is applied, dwelling with strong and derisive emphasis on the point, that with part of it he makes a fire to give him warmth and to dress his food, and with another part of that very same wood he makes himself a god for his worship:—

"None reflecteth in his mind:
He hath neither the knowledge nor the intelligence to say—
Part of it I have burned in the fire;
I have also baked bread over the coals thereof;
I have roasted flesh and eaten it.
Shall I then make the remainder of it an abomination?
Shall I bow down to a clump of wood?"

The general force of the description and of the irony has been at all times intelligible, but the recent discoveries in Egyptian antiquities have brought out the details with a degree of clearness and effect which could not formerly be so well understood. We have there the whole process of idol-manufacture exhibited with remarkable distinctness; and much interest and instruction arise from comparing these pictures with the description of the prophet.

It is observable that the prophet's description applies to an image of carved wood; perhaps intended to be overlaid with metal, as the operations of a smith are in the first instance mentioned. These operations are more clearly described in chap. xl 19:—

"The workman formeth an image,
And the smith overlayeth it with gold;
The smith beateth out silver chains."

Pausanias thinks that all statues were in ancient times of wood, particularly those made in Egypt. He had reasons for this opinion: but the figures which are represented in the act of being made, are chiefly of stone, although those of wood occasionally occur. The description nevertheless applies strongly, notwithstanding the difference of material. This is shown in the 'Pictorial Bible' under Isa. xliv. 13, from which what follows is chiefly taken.

When the Egyptians intended to sculpture, they began by smoothing the surface, and by drawing a number of parallel lines at equal distances, at right angles to which were traced other lines forming a series of squares. The size of these squares depended upon that of the figure to be formed; but, whatever was the size, nineteen parts or spaces were always allowed for the height of the human figure. If smaller figures were to be introduced, intermediate lines were then ruled, which formed smaller squares, and consequently a figure of smaller proportions. May not this explain the marking out with line and compass to which the text refers?

After the outlines of the figure had been traced, it was inspected by a master, who wrote in various parts of it such observations and instructions as he wished to be attended to in the progress of the work, and which of course were obliterated as the sculptures were formed. These were the work of other artists distinct from the draftsmen; and the remainder was completed by others, who added the colouring, gilding, or polish, and who introduced the minute parts of dress or ornament. To this it may not be amiss to add, that the sculptors were not only guided by certain artistical rules, but in the representation of their gods were bound to observe certain forms prescribed by the priests, which it was accounted sacrilege to transgress. The more effectually to accomplish this object, and to preclude the intervention of anything forbidden by the laws in subjects accounted sacred, the profession of an artist was not allowed to be exercised by any common or illiterate person. It is indeed probable that the artists were in some sort attached to and formed a branch of the priesthood.

All these observations apply principally to stone; but, as already intimated, the same essential principles appear to have been applied to the carving of wooden images. The tomb-paintings in Egypt, indeed, afford very ample illustrations of the modes of working in wood, and of the general operations of carpenters, from the felling of the tree, and the sawing up of the wood, to the fabrication of various articles of warlike and domestic use. The engravings which we have selected for the purpose of suggesting some notions of the tools and modes of operation among the ancient carpenters appear to exhibit different stages in the manufacture of spears or pikes. Of these the small cut seems the most interesting. It shows that when a beam was to be cut up into boards or poles, it was set on end and sawn down perpendicularly, and was not held horizontally, as by our sawyers. The beam was bound with ropes to keep the parts together in the progress of the operation. In the cut the workman has sawn nearly down to the band, and is fastening another below it before he withdraws the one in his way. This is shown by the saw which remains in the wood nearly down to the first rope. Another man in the same cut is squaring a beam which he stays with his foot. The axe in this case is exactly like the one we have in common use, and the saw is not materially different: but the adze and other tools represented in the other cuts are unlike any in use among our carpenters. From these and other examples, we learn that, as at present in the East, work-benches were unknown; but the workman pursued his labours seated or half-seated on the ground, and when necessary stood up and rested the article on which he was employed upon a block or any other convenience that offered.

From the mention of tools used by ancient carpenters which we find in the text, it may be interesting to note those which existed among the contemporary neighbouring Egyptians, which were in all probability very similar to those employed by the Israelites. They are the axe, adze, hand-saw (there was no double-handed saw), chisels of various kinds, the drill, and two sorts of planes; and these, with the ruler, plummet, and right-angle, formed the principal, and perhaps the only implements which were employed. After the wood had been reduced to the proper size by the saw, the adze was the principal tool employed for fashioning it; and, as Sir J. G. Wilkinson remarks, from the precision with which even the smallest objects are worked with it at the present day by the unskilful carpenters of modern Egypt, we may form some idea of its use in the hands of their expert predecessors; and we are less surprised to meet with it so frequently represented in the sculptures. Many of those adzes, together with saws and chisels, have been found at Thebes; the blades of all are of bronze, and the handles of the acacia or tamarisk; and, which is very singular, the general mode of fastening the blade to the handle appears to have been by thongs of hide. The drill was similar to that now in use in Egypt and Western Asia, and was turned by a bow with a leathern thong. The chisel was employed for the same purposes, and in the same manner as at the present day, and was struck with a mallet, sometimes flat at the two ends, sometimes of a circular or oval form. The handles of the chisels were of compact wood, and the blades of bronze, variously shaped according to the work for which they were intended.

From the same sources of information we learn that the use of glue existed so early as the time of the Exodus; and also the use of it in the art of veneering, or the application of a thin plank of rare wood to a thicker plank of some other wood more cheap and common. It is highly interesting to be enabled thus to trace to the most remote antiquity an art to which our own dwellings owe so much of their beautiful furniture which would otherwise be unattainable but at an immense expense; and it is pleasant to know, that the people of ancient times were not without many of the advantages which we have until lately been accustomed to regard as peculiar to our own day and generation.

SUNDAY X.—BIBLE HISTORY.

THE trumpet sounded a long blast, and then, after a solemn pause, was heard that voice which then shook the earth, and shall hereafter shake heaven also. The words first uttered were—"I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt: out of the house of bondage." And, then, in that character, he proceeded to declare the ten commandments, regarded as the text and basis of the law afterwards to be laid down in more detail. The mode of communication, through Moses, for the future, was at the express wish of the people themselves, who were very much alarmed at the awful circumstances and stringent limitations of this high audience. They said to Moses—"Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die." This was accordingly done in all subsequent communications with the people. The prophet went up into the mountain, and received there the divine words which, on his return, he made known to the people, and then wrote down in a book. In the present case, after Moses had written down the terms of the covenant, he read them to the people, as if it were to receive their final ratification of its contents. This they gave in the unanimous response, "All the words which the Lord hath said unto us we will do." This public act of recognition having taken place, Moses, who still acted as their priest, proceeded to confirm and seal it in the most solemn manner known in ancient times, namely, by sacrifices. An altar was erected, and twelve stones, representing the twelve tribes, were set up; sacrifices were then offered; and Moses having once more read the covenant and the laws, and received the same answers, proceeded to sprinkle the people with the blood of the sacrifices, saying "This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you." No covenant could be more deliberately entered into, or more bindingly confirmed, than this. We shall see, as we proceed, how it was kept on the part of the Israelites.

After this, Moses went up in the mountain attended by his brother Aaron, the two eldest sons of Aaron, and by seventy of the elders of Israel, as if formally to communicate to the invisible King the final acceptance of the covenant by the people of Israel. They ate and drank there upon the mountain, as was usual in the completion of human covenants, and those who were with Moses were permitted to behold the manifest indications of the divine presence. At a distance they beheld "the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness." Moses was permitted to advance nearer to this glorious manifestation than the others; and was then enjoined to bring up two tablets of stone, on which God himself would write the words of the ten commandments, which involved the obligations of the completed covenant. This was evidently for the purpose of giving the most permanent and imposing form of record to that great compact.

When Moses went up next with the required tablets of stone, he was accompanied only by Joshua, his personal attendant, who was directed to tarry at a distance while the prophet entered the more immediate presence of God. He was then hidden by the cloud which enveloped the mountain, and was capped by "devouring fire," which flamed upon the mountain top. This flaming appearance was called "the glory of the Lord."

Moses was forty days and nights in the mountain, and during this time he received full and particular directions respecting the priesthood and the ecclesiastical establishment which he was to organize for the people whom he had brought out of Egypt. Moses had been aware that his absence would be of unusual duration, and, therefore, he had delegated his authority to his brother Aaron, assisted by Hur, until he should return. His long absence, however, created uneasiness among the people, and they at length gave him up for lost, concluding that he had been consumed by the fire which still glowed upon the mountain. They then went on to conclude that this loss left them to their own plans and resources, and their first act was to release themselves from the abstract and spiritual worship which had been imposed upon them, and to betake themselves to the worship of God through such visible images and symbols as they had accustomed themselves to in Egypt. They were not yet content to separate the idea of God from an image symbolizing his attributes. This may seem strange to us; but it was the notion in which this generation had grown up, and they found it not easy to dissociate ideas which habit had connected. When, therefore, they said to Aaron, "Up, make us gods that may go before us!" they did not intend to abandon Jehovah, but to have manifest to their senses such an image or symbol representing him, as other nations had of the gods they worshipped. But this had been strictly forbidden in the foremost of the commandments which they had so recently received, and which they had so solemnly pledged themselves to obey. The reason of this prohibition is clear. Such images degraded the Godhead, associated him with the false gods similarly represented, created the danger of transferring the worship to such other gods, and even to the very image which in his origin may have been intended for only a representative symbol. The crime and error were, however, in this case much heightened by being in such gross violation of the solemn covenant whereby the Lord had made the Hebrews his peculiar people. That, however, no direct or conscious revolt against the political authority of Jehovah was intended, is shown by the fact that the application was made to Aaron, and that his sanction was in the first place required.

Aaron proved unequal to this great emergency. He feared that the authority committed to him, and now acknowledged by the people, would be lost in the attempt to stem so strong a current of popular feeling. He therefore yielded to it, and contented himself with the hope of being able to make the Lord still the final end and object of all their worship. His policy was indeed that so often since, and probably before, followed—of leading public opinion and subjecting it to useful influences by yielding to it, instead of opposing its encroachments. He demanded their rings with which to fabricate the image they required; perhaps calculating that some reluctance to part with their personal ornaments would cool their ardour in this matter. If this were his thoughts he was mistaken. They readily divested themselves of their ornaments for the purpose; and Aaron fashioned with them the image of "a golden calf," obviously an imitation of the Egyptian ox-god Apis, or rather, perhaps, of the Mnevis of Lower Egypt It is probably a mistake to suppose that this image was all of gold No images wholly of metal appear to have been known in that country, and the mention of its being "fashioned with a graving tool," as well as all the subsequent circumstances, imply that the image was carved in wood and then overlaid with gold. This explanation, entirely consistent as it is with the text, and with the state of the arts at the time, removes many difficulties which have arisen from the notion that the image was wholly of molten gold. This image Aaron presented to the people, and that its final object might not be forgotten, he immediately proclaimed a feast to Jehovah. That this feast was celebrated before the image, is alone sufficient to establish the correctness of the interpretation which has been given. It was, however, celebrated with observances proper to the worship of the Egyptian idol, the form of which had been borrowed. We are told "the people rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings, and the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play:" and afterwards they are described as singing and dancing before the golden calf. So, as we know from ancient writers, the most popular rites of the ancient Egyptians were of the nature of orgies; and the fundamental character of their religion was what, for want of a better word, may be called Bacchanalian—not, indeed, in the modern sense of mere drunkenness, but as including all sorts of sport and merriment.

When these melancholy transactions had arrived at this consummation, Moses was abruptly dismissed from the mountain, with the intimation "Go, get thee down, for *thy* people, whom *thou* broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves, and have turned quickly aside out of the way which I commanded." The prophet understood the terrible emphasis of the pronouns here employed; doubt was not indeed possible, for the Lord added—"Now, therefore, let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, that I may consume them; and I will make of *thee* a great nation." But the latter alternative had no charm for the noble-minded prophet, who ventured reverently to represent that whatever evil befell the race of Israel in the wilderness, would in the estimation of the heathen, reflect discredit on Him in whose high name their deliverance had been effected. This plea prevailed; and the prophet went down from the mountain, bearing in his hands the tablets of stone, on which the words of the ten commandments were now engraven by the hand of God. Joshua joined him in the



267.—A Valley in Sinai.
Dyffryn yn Sinai.



268.—Wady Ghurundel.



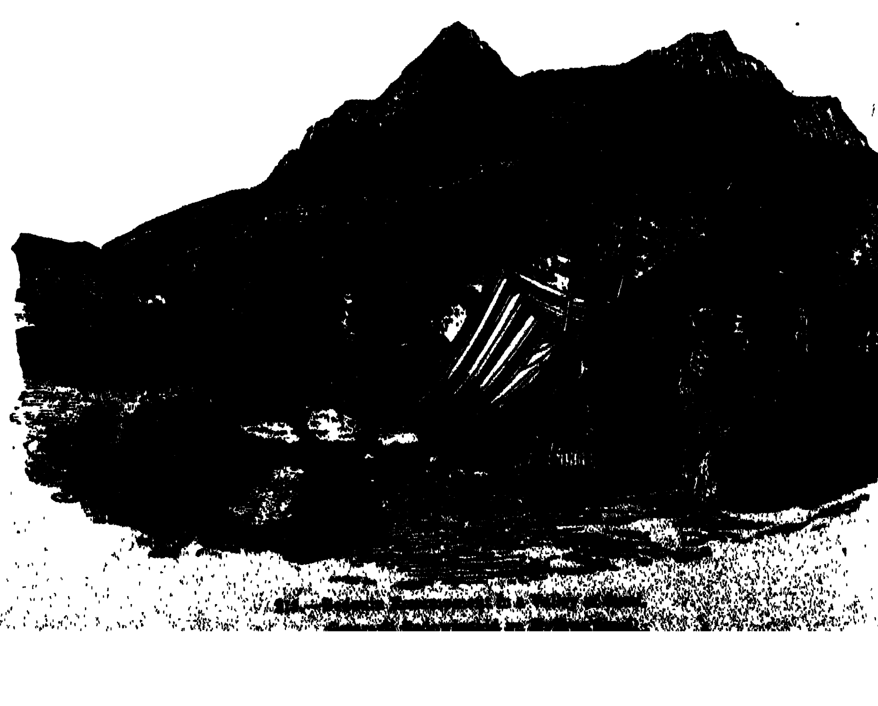
270.—Summit of Mount Moses (Sinai?). (From Laborde.)—Exod. xx.
Crib Mynydd Moses (Sinai?).

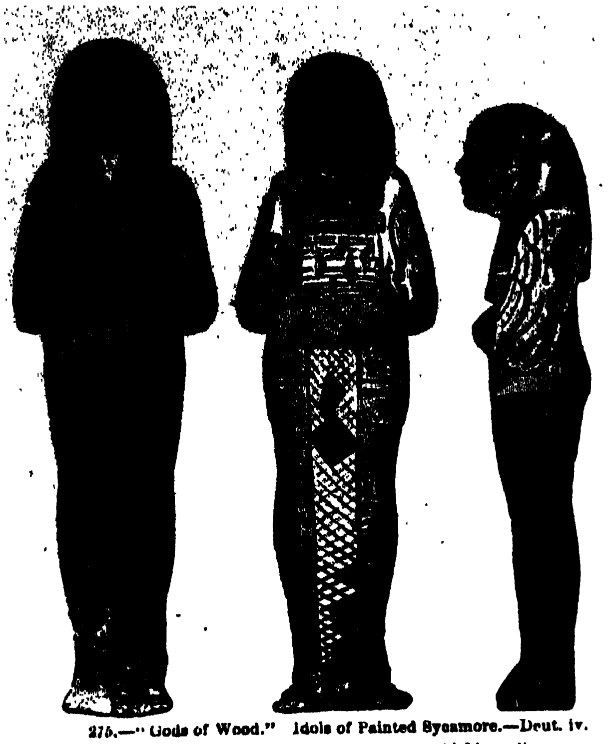


269.—Valley and Convent of Sinai. (From Laborde.)—Exod. xix.
Dyffryn a Mynachlog Sinai.



271.—Wady Feiran.





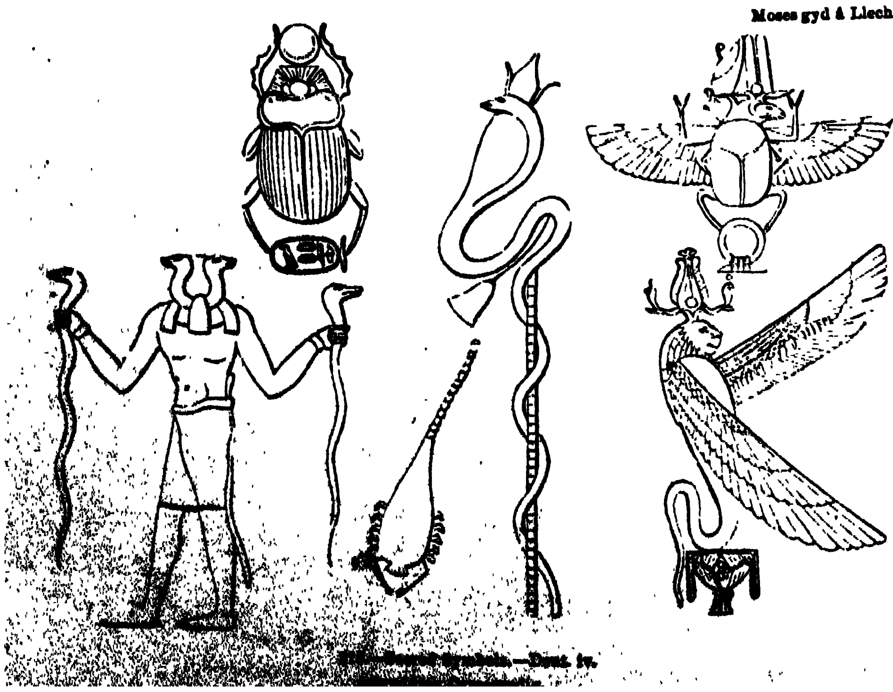
275.—"Gods of Wood." Idols of Painted Sycamore.—Deut. iv.
"Duwiau o Bren." Eilunod o Sycamorwydd Lliwiedig.



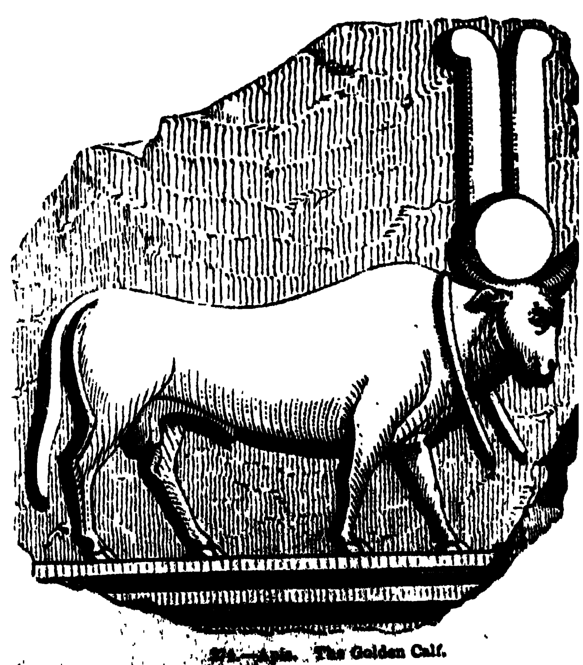
273.—Votaries dancing round the Golden Calf. (N. Poussin.)—Exod. xxxii.
Addolwyr yn dawnsio o amgylch y Llo Aur.



277.—Moses with the Tables of the Law.—Deut. v.
Moses gyd â Llechau y Gyfraith.



[illegible] Symbols.—Deut. iv.



274.—Apis. The Golden Calf.
Y Llo Aur.

descent. As they drew within ear-shot of the camp, Joshua distinguished a great noise in the distance, and remarked, "There is a noise of war in the camp." But the prophet answered bitterly, "It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome; but the voice of them that sing do I hear." A little further advance brought them in view of the whole affair, with the people dancing and shouting around their idol; on which the prophet, in the intensity of his indignation, flung from him the tablets of the law, which were broken in pieces, and hastened forward into the midst of the infatuated crowd, which, confused and humbled at his sudden re-appearance, cowered before him, and submitted quietly to his discretion. He laid his hands upon their idol and cast it into the fire, and then the calcined mass was reduced to powder, and strewed upon the waters, so that the votaries were constrained to drink their own abomination.

The painful duty then remained to Moses of calling his elder brother to account for his part in this shameful transaction. Aaron replied by giving a confused explanation of the matter, as favourable to himself as he could make it; and in a tone which would not lead us to expect from him that force of character which he afterwards found opportunities of manifesting.

After this Moses placed himself at the gate of the camp, and cried, "Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come to me!" This summons could only be answered by those who had not polluted themselves in the matter of the golden calf; and it was only answered by the men of Levi, his own tribe, who gathered around him at that call. These Moses ordered to take their swords and go through the camp, executing summary justice upon the people. And they did so, with rigid impartiality, sparing neither friend nor foe whom they could recognise as having taken a forward part in the worship of the idol. The number they slew was three thousand.

Yet the divine indignation had not wholly turned away; and Moses, knowing this, returned to the mountain to intercede for them. He said, "Oh! this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." The answer to this noble and touching supplication was such as we might expect from the justice of God. "Whosoever hath sinned against me, *him* will I blot out of my book." The Lord then further intimated that, although the descendants of Abraham should be conducted to the land promised to their fathers, He would no longer take the direct charge of them, lest his anger at their iniquities should break forth to their destruction, but would leave them to the guidance of an angel. When the people heard this—when their highest privilege was threatened to be taken from them,—they began to be sensible of its value, and they mourned greatly. Moses himself withdrew the public tent from among them—and pitched it on the outside of the camp; and the people laid aside all their ornaments, and stood as mourners and criminals to abide their final doom. It was favourable. The plea of Moses prevailed, and the Lord promised to receive them again into his protection and peculiar care.

After this Moses was required to repair again to the mountain, there to receive two other tables of stone, in the place of those which had been broken, with the ten commandments engraven upon them. The people were tried forty days more, during which Moses remained in the mount; but this time they continued steady, having been much bettered by the correction they had received.

During his absence Moses received the two "tables of testimony;" the Lord thus renewing the covenant with the Israelites which their misconduct had broken. At the same time the promise of conducting them to the land of Canaan, and of making them triumphant over all their enemies, was renewed. They were, however, strictly enjoined not to imitate the idolatrous customs of the inhabitants of the land which was to be given to them, and were commanded to destroy every monument of idolatry, however costly. They were not to contract any treaties of alliance, friendship, or marriage with idolaters. They were especially warned against falling again into the crime of making an image to represent God. Moses also received a number of ceremonial precepts, which he was directed to write in a book; and being in this and the previous interview fully instructed in all the designs of God respecting his people, at the end of forty days he descended to the camp.

Having been charged to organize a theocratical establishment, with a priesthood, and with a course of ritual service of and attendance on the Divine King, who had promised to dwell among them, Moses delayed not to commence the required operations. In this he was assisted with great zeal by all the people, who were not only actuated by the wish to atone for their recent indiscretion, but were delighted to have a worship, a visible and bodily service, with material symbols of the divine presence, more adapted to their comprehension, and which they were better able to feel than they could the more spiritual and abstract worship which, since their leaving Egypt, had been required from them. They, therefore, readily sent in the most profuse contributions of precious metals, and whatever appeared needful for this great work. By this means and by a poll-tax of half a shekel upon every male Israelite above twenty years of age, ample funds were raised for the required purpose. The poll-tax alone produced above thirty-five thousand pounds of our money, and the voluntary offerings of the people were so very considerable, that Moses was at length obliged to decline any more contributions.

Two persons, Bezaleel and Aholiah, descendants of Judah, were nominated to undertake the execution of the work, and to instruct and superintend their assistants. The arts brought into operation on this occasion were chiefly those of carpentry, metallurgy, jewellery, skin-dressing, weaving, and embroidery; and that a man skilled in art was expected to know something of all these crafts indicates that early state of the arts in which a minute subdivision in the applications of skilled labour had not yet taken place. Hiram, who came from Tyre to execute the interior decorations and furniture of the temple five hundred years later, had an equally extensive knowledge of different branches of art.

The first and greatest work was the erection of a structure in which the Divine King might, after a certain manner, dwell among his people, and in which he might be served as became his state, by such officers, with such observances and offerings, and after that peculiar manner which his twofold character of King and God required. It is always to be remembered that the Lord of heaven and earth stood in that relation to the Hebrews in which he never stood to any other people. He was not only their God, in the same way in which he was the God of the whole earth, but he was, in a peculiar sense, theirs by especial covenant—the God of their fathers. So, he was not only their king, as he was king of all the nations of men—but peculiarly *their* king by a solemn national covenant, and his reign was not to be a mere abstraction, but a sensible reality, a tangible fact. He would have his court and royal attendance: he was, through his ministers, to determine all their proceedings in peace and war, and at stated times all his responsible subjects were to appear before him, to render their homage at his throne. If this leading idea of the theocratical establishment be kept in mind, all that follows will be the clearer.

As the Israelites were now in an unsettled condition, moving from place to place, it became necessary that the temple-palace of the great king should be of small dimensions, and capable of being moved from one place to another. This necessity for its being capable of removal required that it should be so made that it might be taken to pieces and packed up in convenient portions. It is sometimes called a "tent;" but "tabernacle" is a more convenient term: for as the framework and walls were of moveable boards, it was not properly a tent; and as it had tent-like coverings and curtains of cloth, neither was it altogether a hut or house. In fact, it was a fabric most peculiarly adapted to its purpose, with as much of solidity as was compatible with a movable condition.

This tabernacle was an oblong rectangular fabric, thirty cubits long, by ten broad, and ten in height. The two sides were formed by twenty boards standing upright, and fastened at the bottom by tenons in each board, at the top by hasps, and at the sides by five wooden bars which ran through rings fixed in the board. The west end of the tabernacle had eight such boards, but at the east it was only closed by a finely embroidered curtain, which was hung upon five pillars made of acacia (*shittim*) wood overlaid with gold. All the bars and staves were similarly overlaid with gold, and the rings and hasps were of the same metal. All the parts were magnificent and costly throughout. Even the foundation was formed of blocks of solid silver, which were provided with sockets to receive the tenons of the boards. There were two of these silver blocks under every board.

The tabernacle was covered with four curtains, one laid over the other: the first, or inner curtain, in immediate contact with the fabric, was made of fine linen richly embroidered with figures of cherubim in shades of blue, purple, and scarlet; the next, which was spread over the preceding, was made of a sort of mohair, the breadths of which were joined together by clasps of brass; the third curtain consisted of rams'-skins dyed red; and the fourth, or outermost, which was designed to protect the whole from the weather, was made with tachash-skins, erroneously called "badger-skins" in the English translation; for the badger does not inhabit that part of the world, and what the word really denotes is unknown.

SUNDAY X.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

THE faith implied in the trouble taken and the means employed in gaining access to his presence, was that which first and most strongly engaged our Lord's attention when this poor creature was lowered down to his feet. Therefore, he bestowed upon him a greater boon than he came to seek, in the words "Man, thy sins are forgiven thee!" This saying utterly confounded all the learned and high-notioned persons—the Scribes and Pharisees—who happened to be present. They knew that, although a man honoured by the Almighty might work marvels, as the prophets of old had done, the forgiveness of sin was a peculiar and special attribute of God, and hence they thought among themselves, "Who is this that speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Although they did not speak this out, but only thought it, Christ perceived their feeling in this matter, and, turning to them, asked "What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say, 'Thy sins be forgiven thee,' or to say, 'Rise up and walk?'" And then, using his power to say the latter as an argument of his right to say the former, he added:—"But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins" (and here he turned to the palsied man) "I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go unto thine house!" And immediately the man felt his miserable limbs loosened from their long bondage, he felt them gather strength and substance, he felt them roused to vital action; and he sprung upon his feet, he took up the couch on which he had the moment before lain helpless and impotent, and he hastened therewith to his own house glorifying God. The astonished crowd also dispersed; and men said to one another, "We have seen strange things to day!"

If there were any people whom the Jews detested more than even the Samaritans, more than even the very heathen, it was the Publicans. This constantly appears in the Gospels, where the proud Pharisees make it a frequent matter of reproach to Christ that he associated with "Publicans and sinners." The Publicans were tax-gatherers—a body of men not much liked in any country, but absolutely loathed in Palestine. This requires some explanation.

The government taxes under the Romans were usually farmed by persons of family and consideration, and although they were called Publicans by the Romans, they are not to be confounded with the Publicans of the New Testament. Even this office, however, had considerably declined from its ancient reputation, as the farmers of the revenue began to let it appear that they cared considerably more for their own profits than for the revenues of the state, or for the well-being of those by whom the taxes were paid. These personages of course employed large numbers of persons to collect the taxes and customs, who were mostly natives of the country in which the taxes were collected. These were also called Publicans, and were in general discredit,—first, for their rapaciousness in the endeavour to make a purse for themselves by extortionate exactions upon their own countrymen, and that too in the payment of tributes odious in themselves; and, then, on account of their connection with and dependence upon the conquering people. In a conquered nation we always find those persons odious who enter into the service of the conquering people, and much more when the service in which they engage is one which would be odious under any circumstances. Now, if this were the case generally, we may judge with what intensity these feelings would operate among such a people as the Jews, who abhorred the Roman yoke, who regarded as almost impious the payment of tribute to the heathen, and who deemed that intercourse with the heathen, which the office of the Publican involved, as amounting to an absolute defilement. This disrepute of the office naturally operated in throwing it into the hands of low and unprincipled persons, whose conduct aggravated and in some degree justified the odium in which the employment was held. This was so strong that the publicans formed, as it were, a caste by themselves, with whom few would sit down to meat, and into whose houses few would enter. No doubt there were some exceptions to the character thus given to them; no doubt there were among them respectable and fair-dealing men: but this was their general character, and there were probably fewer persons who thought well of the publicans than there were publicans who deserved to be well thought of.

One day when Jesus went forth from the town of Capernaum to the border of the lake, attended by a crowd as usual, he observed a publican named Matthew "sitting at the receipt of custom." Some think that he sat in the maritime gate of the town, but it appears that the publicans had booths or toll-houses at the foot of bridges, at the mouth of rivers, and by the sea-shore. They received tolls from those who crossed the water, and delivered a ticket which exempted the person from any further payment on the other side. In the present case Matthew probably received the tolls of those who crossed the Lake of Gennesareth at this point, trafficking in fish and other goods. Jesus called to this person, "Follow me;" and immediately "he left all, rose up, and followed him." This readiness to follow him who had not where to lay his head, is the more praiseworthy when we reflect that Matthew was a man of some substance, as indeed most of the publicans were, even the fair gains of the occupation being very considerable. That Matthew was such, appears from the great feast which he gave to Jesus and his disciples that same evening, and at which so many publicans were present as gave occasion for the first murmur against our Lord as one who kept company with publicans and sinners.

The time of the Passover again came round (32 A.D.), and Jesus proceeded to Jerusalem with his disciples.

The gate by which sheep, especially those destined for the service of the temple, were brought into the city, was called the Sheep-gate. Not far from this gate was a bath or pool, called the Pool of Bethesda. Under the north wall of the temple there is still a deep reservoir which travellers identify with this pool. This reservoir measures three hundred and sixty feet in length, one hundred and thirty in breadth, and seventy-five feet in depth to the bottom, besides the rubbish which has been accumulating in it for ages. It has obviously been used as a reservoir, for the sides have been cased internally with small stones, and these again covered with plaster; but there are some signs that this is a comparatively recent appropriation; and Dr. Robinson is strongly persuaded that it anciently formed part of the trench or ditch which on this side bounded the temple. This matter requires and will doubtless receive further investigation, and meanwhile we must be content to remain in some doubt whether any traces of the Pool of Bethesda now exist. This pool was a kind of bath with some healing property in its waters, which occasioned it to be the resort of diseased persons, for whose accommodation the place was provided with five porches. The account given of this bath by the Evangelist is:—"An angel went down at a certain season into the pool and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had." There are difficulties in this, which are perhaps best met by the explanation of our judicious Doddridge, who supposes that the water had at all times more or less of a medicinal property; but at some period, not far distant from that in which the transactions here recorded took place, it was endued with a miraculous power, an extraordinary commotion being probably observed in the water, and Providence so ordering it, that the next person who accidentally bathed there, being under some great disorder, found an immediate and unexpected cure; the like phenomenon in some other desperate case was probably observed on a second commotion: and these commotions and cures might happen periodically.

In the porches of the bath at this time lay a large number of diseased persons, the blind, the halt, the withered, waiting the opportunity of going into the water as soon as the commotion should be observed. As our Lord passed this way his attention was directed to a man who had been in a helpless condition for thirty-eight years. To him Christ put the thrilling question—"Wilt thou be made whole?" But the man, not apprehending the full drift of the question, replied by explaining that hitherto he had been unable to step into the water at the time of cure; for others, when the commotion was observed, went in before him and reaped the benefit. Then Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk!" And he was instantly obeyed; the man arose perfectly whole, and departed to his home bearing the bed on which he had a moment before lain in cureless paralysis.

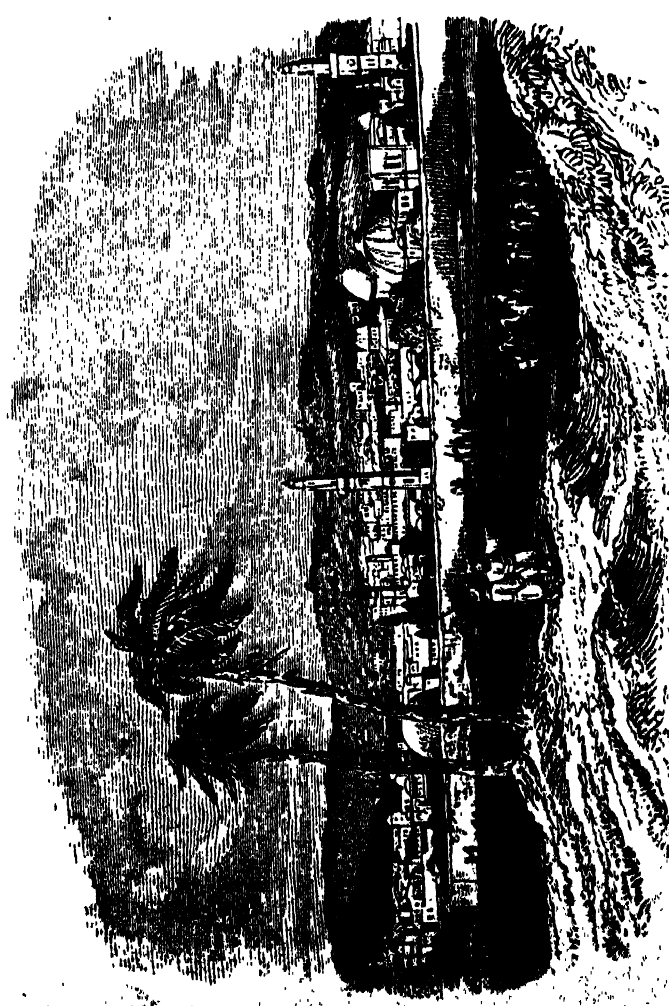
It happened to be the Sabbath-day, on which it was deemed unlawful to carry any burden. The man was reminded of this by the persons whom he passed with his burden. He pleaded the order of the person who had made him whole, but who was unknown to him. He afterwards, however, saw Christ, and was spoken to by him in the temple, and then he went and reported who it was that had made him whole.



278.—Open House of Court at Cairo.
Ty agored Llys yn Cairo.



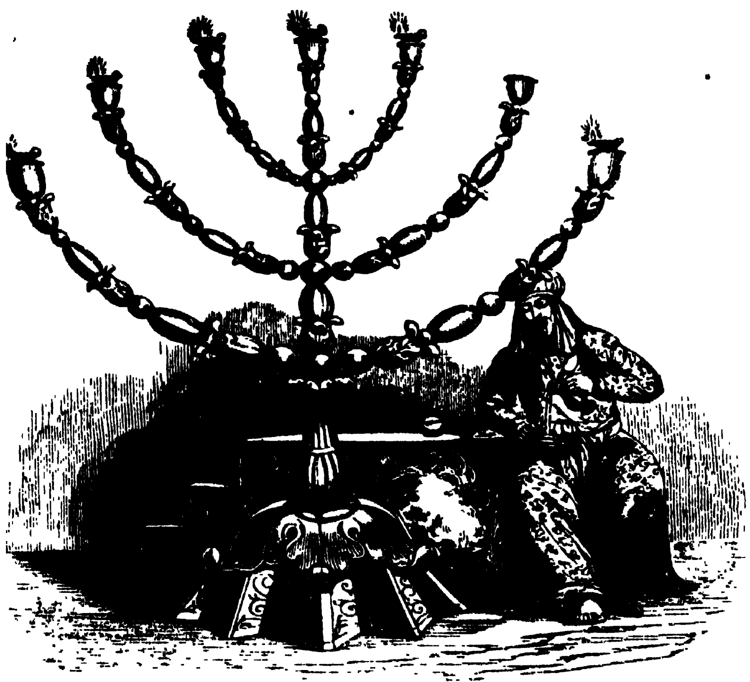
279.—Pool of Bethesda. (Meyer.)
Llyn Bethesda.



280.—Jerusalem, with the Mount of Olives. (From Light's Travels.)
[illegible]



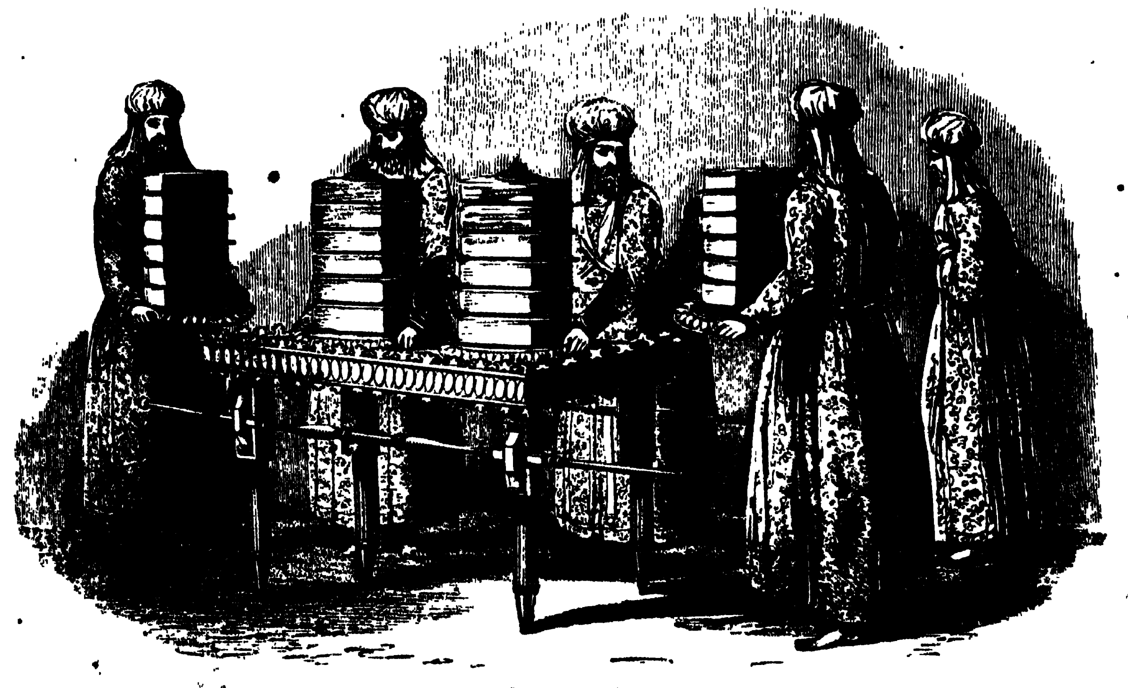
231.—Probable Form of the Ark of the Covenant.—Exod. xxv.
Ffurf dybiedig Arch y Cyfammod.



232.—Supposed Form of the Golden Candlestick.—Exod. xxv.
Ffurf dybiedig y Canwyllbren Aur.



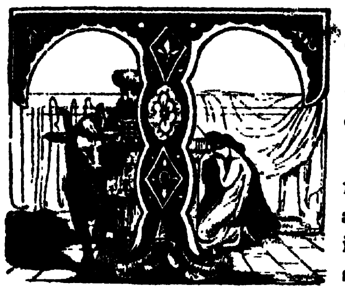
234.—Probable Form of the Altar of Incense.—Exod. xxx
Ffurf Dybiedig Allor yr Arogldarth.



233.—Probable Form of the Table of Shew-bread. (After Bernard Lamy.) Priests removing the Old and placing the New.—Exod. xxv.

Ffurf dybiedig Bwrdd y Bara-gosod. (Yn ol Bernard Lamy.) Yr Offeiriaid yn symmud yr Hen ac yn gosod y Newydd.—Exod. xxv.

SUNDAY XI.—BIBLE HISTORY.



THE interior of the tabernacle was divided into two rooms, by a curtain made of the richest stuff and embroidered with figures of cherubim. The description in Exodus xxv. 10—22, does not state the distance from either end of the tabernacle at which this curtain was hung; but it is concluded that it divided the sacred apartments in the same proportion which was afterwards observed in the temple, where two-thirds of the whole space was allotted to the outer chamber, or holy place, and one-third to the inner chamber, or holy of holies.

Now a temple-palace like this needed a sort of furniture meet for the Great Habitant, and such services as might indicate a Living Presence therein. With such it was provided: and we proceed to describe the sacred utensils which the two chambers contained.

1. In the outer chamber, or holy place, to the right hand of the priest as he walked up, was the table of shew-bread, or, more properly, of presence-bread, because the bread placed therein was set forth before or in the presence of the ark, over which was the seat of the Divine King. This table was of shittim-wood overlaid with gold. Its shape was oblong, and it was furnished at the top with a raised and ornamental border of gold. There was at each corner a golden ring or staple, through which were inserted the poles, plated with gold, by which it was to be carried when the tribes moved from place to place.

Upon this table were twelve loaves or cakes of bread, called the shew-bread, or bread of the presence: these loaves were prepared by the Levites, and were twelve in number, representing the twelve tribes, each of whom was supposed to offer one of these loaves; and it may be well to add that this number was not diminished even after ten of the tribes had apostatized from the worship of God, for the children of Abraham were still regarded collectively as a nation, and there was always a remnant of faithful worshippers even in apostate Israel. Each of the cakes was made with two omers of fine flour. According to the explanations of the sacred text given by Jewish writers, they were placed one upon another in two piles. Under the lowest cake was a golden plate, and between every two cakes above, a golden plate, and the top of all was a golden plate turned down as a cover, on the top of which stood a golden vase with frankincense. Instead of the plates between the loaves, some interpreters place short golden rods, two between each cake, which would seem more convenient, as the air might then circulate between the cakes.

Belonging to the table there were also spoons, covers, and bowls, all of gold, the several uses of which it is not easy to determine. The covers were, however, probably, as already indicated, designed to cover the piles of bread; the spoons are supposed to have been used for removing or replenishing frankincense; and although there was no wine on the table, the bowls representing its presence may have been regarded as suitable to the furniture of the sacred table.

Every Sabbath-day the loaves and the frankincense which had stood all the previous week were removed, and new bread and frankincense set on. The old frankincense was burnt as an oblation, and the old bread belonged to the priests, who, however, were allowed to eat it only in the holy place.

2. The sacred dwelling had no windows, nor any other light than it derived from the lamps of the golden candelabrum, which was by far the richest article; and as the place had no windows, it has been supposed that the lamps were kept burning day and night. Indeed Josephus, who was a priest, and could not be ignorant of the matter, expressly states that this was the case. The passages, therefore, which seem to describe the lamps as "going out," and as being "set on" (1 Sam. iii. 3; 1 Chron. xiii. 11), must probably be taken to apply to the times when they had burnt low, and were taken off, and probably put out in succession, to be properly replenished, and then restored to their places. It is affirmed by the Jews that the old dresses of the priests, which could not be worn by others or applied to any common use, were shred up to form wicks for the sacred lamps.

This golden candlestick stood opposite the table of shew-bread. Its dimensions are not stated, but it is usually supposed to have been about twice the height of the latter. It weighed a hundred pounds, and was made of solid gold. It contained seven lights, six branching out in three pairs from the upright stem, and one at the top. The figure of this splendid utensil has happily been preserved to modern time by the sculpture on the triumphal arch of Titus at Rome, and will convey a better notion of it than any description. The top and the extremity of each branch formed a stand for a movable lamp, the form of which is not mentioned, but which were probably similar to those in use among the Egyptians about the same period, the forms of which are known to us. These lamps were fed with pure olive-oil (that is, oil which was not pressed from the olives, but which flowed freely from them when bruised with a pestle). They were trimmed and replenished at stated intervals by the priests.

3. Between the candlestick and the table of shew-bread, and in the middle of the holy place, stood the altar of incense. This was of the same materials and general construction as the table of shew-bread, shittim-wood overlaid with gold, with an ornamental golden rim, staples, and gold-covered staves: it had, moreover, like all the Hebrew altars, raised and pointed corners called "the Horns," which also we find in the altars of other nations. Its dimensions were, however, smaller than those of the table. It was a cubit square, and two cubits high, which is half a cubit higher than the table, and was probably intended to prevent the priest from much stooping in the discharge of his duty. This altar was not provided with any grate or fire-place, like the altar of sacrifice, but on the top of it was set, at the time of offering incense, a golden pan containing live coals, on which the incense was burned, and which was removed when the incense had been offered. The incense was burnt every morning and evening at the time of dressing the lamps, and is called a "perpetual incense," because the offering of it twice a day was never to be intermitted. The incense used in this service was a peculiar preparation, which could not lawfully be used for any other purpose. The fragrance emitted by it was very sweet, and so powerful that the Jewish writers hyperbolically affirm that when offered at Jerusalem it could be scented even at Jericho. Nothing but incense was to be placed or offered on this altar; but once a year, on the great day of atonement, it was sprinkled by the high priest, and its "horns" smeared with the blood of the sin offering.

The inner chamber of the tabernacle, or the Holy of Holies, in which was only the Ark of the Covenant, was by far the most sacred object in the tabernacle. It was regarded as a holy mystery, the seat or throne of the Most High, the object with which his presence was more immediately connected. So sacred did the place thus become in which it stood, that none but the high priest might enter there, and he only in one day of the year—the great day of Atonement. The ark was, in fact, the shrine of Jehovah as God of Israel, and his throne as King of the Israelites. The ark was a chest two cubits and a half long, one and a half wide, and one and a half high. It was made of shittim-wood plated over with gold within and without, and richly chased. It contained the two tables of stone upon which the ten commandments were engraven. The lid of the ark was appropriately called the "Mercy-seat," as some suppose on account of its being represented as the throne of God, who is full of long-suffering and mercy; or, as others think, because it represented the effect of God's mercy to the transgressors of his law, by covering, as it were, their transgressions. Upon the upper face of the mercy-seat were placed two winged figures, called Cherubim: and it was between these that the Shechinah, called the "glory of God," which was the visible resplendence betokening his presence, was stationed; whence it is that God is said to "dwell between the cherubim," and to "sit betwixt the cherubim."

Such was the tabernacle and its contents.

The tabernacle stood in a court or area, which was one hundred cubits long and fifty cubits broad. Its enclosure was formed by pillars set in bases of copper and filleted with silver, to which hangings made of fine twined linen were fastened by silver hooks. The entrance into this area was at the east end, fronting the tabernacle, where richer hangings than those which formed the general enclosure were supported by four pillars; these were not fastened like the rest, but were made to draw or lift up.

It was in this court, immediately in front of the tabernacle, that the principal services of the Jewish religion by sacrifices took place. The principal utensils connected with these services, and stationed in the court of the tabernacle, were the altar of burnt offering and the brazen laver.

SUNDAY XI.—THE PSALMS.

Stringed Instruments of Music.

AN opinion has already been expressed that the *Kinnor*, which our translation renders by "harp," was a kind of lyre; and that the *Nebel*, which is the psaltery of our version, was probably a different, and perhaps a triangular kind of lyre.

It may then be asked if the Hebrews had no "harp," properly so called? We think they had; indeed we have no doubt they had, although we hesitate to say by which of the Hebrew names of stringed instruments it is described. And when we consider the dense obscurity which envelops the subject, which is such as to defy elucidation, and almost to discourage all research, let it be no matter of reproach to us if, out of the thirty-six instruments of music which the Jewish writers ascribe to their fathers, we doubt in what particular text or name to find one which we believe them to possess. The harp may have been the *nebel;* and it may have been "the solemn-sounding kinnor" (Ps. xcii. 3); or any other of the stringed instruments the Hebrew names of which remain to be appropriated. We certainly incline to think it must have been described under the *kinnor* or *nebel* class of instruments; because these were used in the temple services, and we can scarcely conceive that a people which had the harp would fail to include it among their instruments of sacred music.

The reasons on which we conclude the Hebrews did possess the harp are:—that if the harp then existed at all, and was accessible to the Hebrews, it was almost certain to be used by them—attached as they were to music, and especially to the music of stringed instruments: and as it *did* then exist, and was so accessible to them, that if they had it not, it must have been wilfully neglected, the proof is almost demonstrative that the harp did exist among the Hebrew instruments. This could not be with reasonable confidence affirmed until of late years, when the monuments of Egypt have established the fact that the harp existed in that country in times when the Hebrews could not fail to know it and to be familiar with it. In a tomb at Thebes two magnificent harps are figured on the walls, both alike, except that one has eleven strings and the other thirteen. The former is that represented in our engraving, copied from Rosellini's great work 'I Monumenti del Egitto,' which is more accurate than the figure and description of Bruce, who, in a letter to Dr. Burney, was the first to give the public an account of this most interesting specimen of ancient art. The following is the portion of his interesting letter which refers to it:—

"Behind the ruins of the Egyptian Thebes, and a very little to the N.W. of it, are a great number of mountains hollowed into monstrous caverns;—the sepulchres, according to tradition, of the first kings of Thebes. The most considerable of these mountains thus hollowed, contains a large sarcophagus. At the end of the passage on the left hand, is the picture of a man playing upon the harp, painted in fresco, and quite entire.

"He is clad in a habit made like a shirt, such as the women still wear in Abyssinia, and the men in Nubia.* This seems to be white linen or muslin, with narrow stripes of red. It reaches down to his ankles; his feet are without sandals, and bare; his neck and arms are also bare; his loose wide sleeves are gathered above his elbows; his head is close shaved; he seems a corpulent man of about fifty years of age, in colour rather of the darkest for an Egyptian.

"To guess by the detail of the figure, the painter should have had the same degree of merit with a good sign-painter in Europe; yet he has represented the action of the musician in a manner never to be mistaken. His left hand seems employed in the upper part of the instrument, among the notes in *alto*, as if in an *arpeggio;* while, stooping forwards, he seems with his right hand to be beginning with the lowest string, and promising to ascend with the most rapid execution: this action, so obviously rendered by an indifferent artist, shows that it was a common one in his time, or, in other words, that great hands were then frequent, and, consequently, that music was well understood, and diligently followed.

"If we allow the performer's stature to be about five feet ten inches, then we may compute the harp, in its extreme length, to be something less than six feet and a half. It seems to support itself in equilibrio on its foot or base, and needs only the player's guidance to keep it steady. It has thirteen strings; the length of these, and the force and liberty with which they are treated, show that they are made in a very different manner from those of the lyre.

"This instrument is of a much more elegant form than the Grecian harp. It wants the forepiece of the frame, opposite to the longest string, which certainly must have improved its tone, but must likewise have rendered the instrument itself weaker, and more liable to accidents, if carriage had not been so convenient in Egypt. The back part is the sounding-board, composed of four thin pieces of wood, joined together in form of a cone, that is, growing wider towards the bottom; so that, as the length of the string increases, the square of the corresponding space in the sounding-board, in which the tone is to undulate, always increases in proportion.

"Besides that, the principles upon which the harp is constructed are rational and ingenious; the ornamental parts are likewise executed in the very best manner; the bottom and sides of the frame seem to be veneered, or inlaid probably with ivory, tortoise-shell, and with mother-of-pearl, the ordinary produce of the neighbouring seas and deserts. It would be, even now, impossible to finish an instrument with more taste and elegance.

"Besides the elegance of its outward form, we must observe, likewise, how near it approached to a perfect instrument; for it wanted only two strings of having two complete octaves in compass. Whether these were intentionally omitted or not, we cannot now determine, as we have no idea of the music or taste of that time; but if the harp be painted in the proportions in which it was made, it might be demonstrated that it could scarce bear more than the thirteen strings with which it was furnished. Indeed, the cross-bar would break with the tension of the four longest, if they were made of the size and consistence, and tuned to the pitch, that ours are at present.

"I look upon this instrument, then, as the Theban harp, before and at the time of Sesostris, who adorned Thebes, and probably caused it to be painted there, as well as the other figures in the sepulchre of his father, as a monument of the superiority which Egypt had in music at that time, over all the barbarous nations that he had seen or conquered."

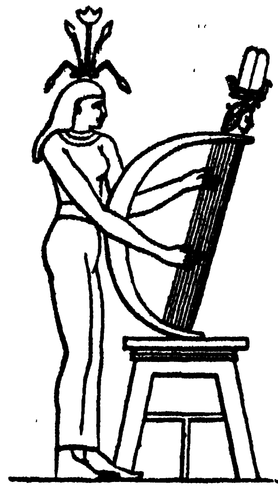
To this we may add a few particulars from the more recent and exact research of other travelled antiquarians.

The harps found in Bruce's Tomb, as it is called, are to be regarded as those of the royal minstrels, whose office seems to have corresponded to that of Asaph, who was the chief master of music under David (1 Chron. xvi. 7, xxv. 6). Hence the splendid manner in which they are fitted up, and their adornment with the bust of the king himself. There are, however, harps of very different shape, and of much older date. There are, indeed, some so old as the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt, and it is important to mark that these occur not in Upper, but in Lower Egypt, in a tomb near the pyramids of Geezeh. These are more rude in shape than those usually represented, and the number of their chords does not appear to have exceeded seven or eight. Thus it appears that the Israelites had opportunities of becoming acquainted with the harp during their long stay in Egypt; and in their subsequent intercourse with the Egyptians, especially during the time of Solomon, whose principal wife was an Egyptian princess, they could not well avoid becoming aware of the improvements which the instrument had in the course of time received.

The Egyptian harps, as our engravings show, varied greatly in form, size, and the number of their strings; they are represented in the ancient paintings with eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, fourteen, seventeen, twenty, twenty-one, and twenty-two chords. Indeed harps of fourteen and lyres of seventeen strings were found to have been used by the ordinary Egyptian musicians as early as the reign of Amosis, who is supposed to have been the king "who knew not Joseph," and in whose time Moses was born. They were frequently very large, even exceeding the height of a man, tastefully painted with flowers and fancy devices.

The strings of the Egyptian harps were of catgut; and some have been discovered at Thebes which were so well preserved that they emitted a sound on being touched. Some harps were placed upon the ground, having an even broad base, like those in Bruce's Tomb; others were placed upon a stool, or raised upon a stand or limb attached to the lower part.

The harpers in Bruce's Tomb play before Ao, one of the Egyptian deities, and there are other examples of its employment in their



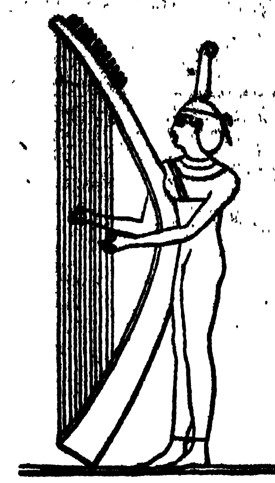
285.



286.



287.



288.

285—288.—Various Forms of Egyptian Harps.
Amryw Ffurfiau o Delynau Aiphtaidd.



290.—Psalm xlv.



291.—Psalm xlvi.



293.—Psalm xlviii.



289.—Psalm xliv.



E have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us what thou hast done in their time of old.—1.

Psalm xlv.

The King's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold.—13.

She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework the virgins that be her fellows shall bear her company, and shall be brought unto thee.—14.



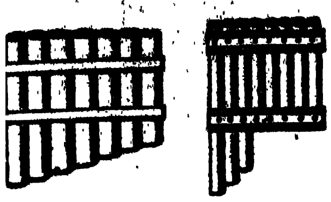
292.—Psalm xlvii.



294.—Psalm xlix.



295.—From a Painting found in a Tomb at Thebes.
O Bortread a gafwyd mewn Beddrod yn Thebes.



296.—Pandean Pipes.
Pibau Pandeanaidd.



297.—Egyptian Concert.
Cyngherdd Aiphtaidd.



299.—Psalm li.



300.—Psalm lii.



302.—Psalm liv.





298.—Psalm l.

THE Lord, even the most mighty God, hath spoken: and called the world, from the rising up of the sun to the going down thereof.—1.

Psalm li.

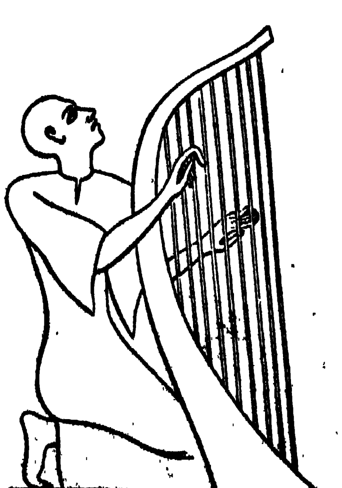
Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness; according to the multitude of thy mercies do away mine offences.—1.



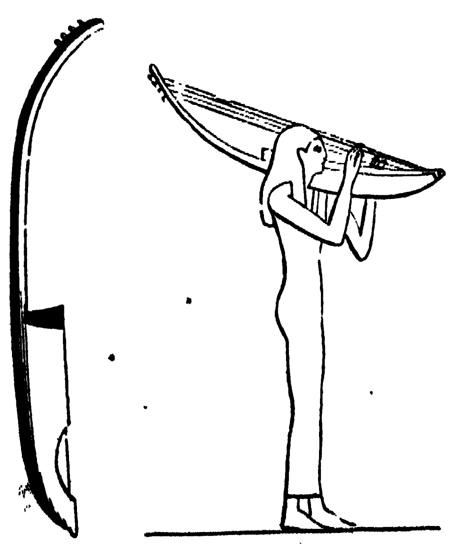
301.—Psalm liii.



303.—Psalm lv.



304.—Egyptian Harp.
Telyn Aiphtaidd.



305.—Early Forms of Egyptian Harps.
Ffurfiau Boreuol o Delynau Aiphtaidd.



306.—Modern Arabian Guitar.
Cithara, sef Telyn Arabaidd Ddiweddar.

worship, and to celebrate the praises of the gods. "So suitable, indeed (remarks Sir J. G. Wilkinson), was the harp considered for this purpose that they represented it in the hands of the deities themselves, as well as the tambourine and the sacred sistrum. It was held in the same consideration by the Jews; and there is reason to believe that in this respect they followed the example of the Egyptians, from whom many of their customs were derived."

There is another instrument of the guitar kind, which seems to have been as common among the Egyptians as the lyre and the harp, and although we find a difficulty in saying with confidence which of the Hebrew names refers to it, there seems every reason to conclude that it was known under some one of these names to the ancient inhabitants of Palestine. The reasons for this conclusion are nearly the same as those on which we conclude that they had an instrument similar to the Egyptian harp. It is, indeed, admitted by the best writers on the subject, that they were in possession of a kind of guitar, but they differ so much respecting the name it bore in Hebrew, that we prefer to express our opinion that they had the instrument, but to acknowledge that we cannot tell by what name they called it. The Jews themselves identify the guitar with the *cithara*, which is named in Dan. iii. 15, and which is there translated by "harp." There is, in fact, considerable resemblance between the words cithara and guitar. The instrument is undoubtedly Eastern; Spain obtained it, along with the name, from the Arabs, and imparted it to Europe. The Spaniards themselves believe the instrument to be as old as the lyre and the harp, and the monuments of Egypt strongly confirm that opinion. Indeed the question of the antiquity of these three instruments is by this evidence placed beyond all further controversy. There are figured in the Egyptian tombs, and there are preserved in collections of Egyptian antiquities, a number of instruments of various forms, some bearing a resemblance to the modern guitar, and others differing much from it in shape; but as they all agree in the principle of the strings being drawn over a sonorous box of wood, and prolonged over a stem connected therewith, we are disposed to refer them all to the same class. If the reader refers to the picture of an Egyptian concert—which contains matter over which a musical antiquarian might muse for hours—he will perceive that the figures 4 and 8 are plainly guitars, and he will incline to think that the figure 2 may, however different in shape, be referred to the same class, rather than to that of the harp or lyre. To this belong also two other figures which we have introduced. Sir J. G. Wilkinson, however, confines the denomination to the former; and the following is the substance of his description:—

The Egyptian guitar has only three chords, and it consists of two parts, a long flat neck or handle, and a hollow oval body, either wholly of wood or covered with leather, whose upper surface was perforated with several holes to allow the sound to escape. Over this body and the whole length of the handle extended three strings, no doubt, as usual, of catgut, secured at the upper extremity either by the same number of pegs or by some other means peculiar to the instrument. It does not appear to have had any bridge, but the chords were fastened at the lower end to a triangular piece of wood or ivory, which raised them to a sufficient height. The length of the handle was sometimes twice, sometimes thrice that of the body, and the whole would seem to have often measured about four feet, the breadth of the body being equal to half its length. It was struck with the plectrum, which was attached by a string to the neck, and the performers usually stood as they played. Both men and women used this guitar. Some danced while they touched its strings, supporting it on the right arm, and instances occur of its being slung by a band around the neck like the Spanish guitar.

This Egyptian instrument may be regarded as the parent of that which has descended to us through the Arabians. We have, therefore, given a figure of that now used among that people, a glance at which will suffice to indicate the degree in which, in form and use, it agrees with or differs from the one and the other.

In all the allusions to musical instruments in Scripture, no one can fail to notice the remarkable predominance of stringed instruments. The same is observed among other ancient nations, and especially among the Egyptians, whose representations of other instruments are very rare in comparison. In the cut representing an Egyptian concert, at p. 85, there are twelve performers, of whom eight have stringed instruments, and two of the remaining four only beat time with their hands. Indeed, in most Egyptian concerts we see persons thus engaged in beating time by clapping their hands together. They probably sung at the same time. In one piece, a blind harper is accompanied by seven blind choristers, who all clap the time and sing with great animation. This may explain some of the allusions to the clapping of hands which we meet with in the Scriptures, and especially in the Psalms.

WIND INSTRUMENTS.

WE must now turn our attention to the wind instruments, of which those in use among the Hebrews appear to have been few and simple, unless some of the names given to them in Scripture are generic rather than specific, denoting rather classes than individual instruments.

The first which is mentioned in Scripture is the *Ugab*, which is very unwisely rendered by "organ" in the authorised version. This word is calculated to excite very delusive notions in the English reader—as if the Hebrews had anything which in form or principle resembled the instrument which we call an organ.

The *ugab* is agreed to have been a kind of Pandean pipe, made of a number of reeds of unequal length joined together, blown into by the mouth, which is moved over them as the modulation of the tune requires. This is the instrument still in familiar use among ourselves. Assuming it to be the same with the *ugab*, it is certainly one of the most ancient instruments in the world, having been one of those invented by Jubal long before the Flood (Gen. iv. 21). The only other places where it is mentioned in Scripture are twice in the book of Job (xxi. 12; xxx. 31), and once in the last Psalm (cl. 4). We shall not here enter into the philological grounds on which the Pandean pipe is identified with the ugab. But it may be remarked, that the great age of the former is a circumstance much in favour of this conclusion. The instrument is so old, indeed, that the profane writers, seldom as they are at a loss in such matters, do not know to whom the invention should be referred. Some ascribe it to Pan; Athenæus to Marsyas and Silenus; Pindar to Mercury. The fable which ascribes it to Pan was the most generally received. It states that he formed the instrument of the reeds that grew by the river, and caused it to give forth all manner of agreeable sounds, while his goats were skipping around him and feeding on the banks. This shows that it was regarded as properly a sylvan and pastoral instrument, and so it seems to be mentioned in Job (xxi. 11, 12). Another story shows that a very good opinion of the instrument was entertained by the alleged inventor. He even thought it superior to the lyre of Apollo, whom he challenged to the trial, and, the challenge being accepted, the umpire (who was no other than Midas) decided in favour of Pan's pipe.

The extensive diffusion of this instrument corroborates the accounts of its early invention; unless, indeed, it may have been invented by different nations which since the dispersion of mankind have had no communication with one another. When, however, we know that a thing existed before the Deluge, we have the means of tracing its communication to all nations through the single family which survived that event. It is still common in the East. Niebuhr saw one made of reeds in the hands of a peasant at Cairo. It is there somewhat in the form of a half moon, and has usually fourteen or fifteen reeds. Formerly it had ordinarily seven. On ancient monuments, however, we sometimes find it composed of a greater number. It was properly the shepherd's pipe, and is repeatedly indicated as such in the Idylls of Theocritus; and although in the first Idyll it is described as formed of seven reeds, two with nine reeds are described in Idyll viii.

> "A pipe I formed of nine unequal reeds,
> Sweet-ton'd, with whitest wax compacted tight."

Dr. Russell, in his 'Natural History of Aleppo,' also says, "The syrinx, or Pan's pipe, is still a pastoral instrument in Syria; it is known also in the city, but very few performers can sound it tolerably well. The high notes are clear and pleasing, but the lower reeds are apt to make a hissing sound, though blown by a good player."

To this we may add the following, from Dr. Burney's 'History of Music:'—"A syrinx, or Pan's pipe, exactly resembling that of the ancients, has been found to be in common use in the island of New Amsterdam in the South Seas, as flutes and drums have been in Otaheite and New Zealand, which indisputably proves them to be instruments natural to every people in a state of barbarism. They were first used by the Greeks and Egyptians, during the infancy of the musical art among them; and they seem to have been invented and practised at all times by nations remote from each other, and between whom it is hardly possible that there ever could have been the least intercourse or communication." This, however, must be modified by reference to the consideration already stated with respect to instruments which existed, as the ugab did, before the dispersion of mankind. But the fact of this general use of the instrument increases the probability of its being among the instruments of the Hebrew people.

SUNDAY XI.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

NOW the man probably did this with good intentions, but it furnished the Jews with a ground of reproach against Jesus, not as one who had directed another to break the Sabbath, but as one who had broken it himself by performing this cure on the Sabbath-day. It was only in cases of urgent and extreme necessity that the sick received the usual attention on the Sabbath-day, the rule being not to do anything for them which could be postponed to the next day without danger, and, therefore, in this case, they would argue that seeing the man had lain so long in this state, the act of cure should have been delayed till the next day, and not performed on the Sabbath. We are not to suppose that Christ had any intention to slight the Sabbath. The notions to which his practice was opposed were not sanctioned by the law of Moses, but were the preposterous refinements of a later age. But even if they had been required by the Law of Moses, he—with his equal, his far higher commission—was not bound by its restrictions; for he came with a greater law of his own, and was "Lord even of the Sabbath-day."

It is remarkable how many circumstances are reported by the Evangelists to have taken place on the Sabbath-day. From this we must infer that our Lord purposely wrought his more signal miracles on that day, for the reasons already indicated, or the Evangelists select these on account of the discussions to which they gave rise. The latter seems the more probable conclusion. The next case on which this discussion was raised was, however, an incident involving no display of divine power.

On the Sabbath-day following that on which the paralytic at the Pool of Bethesda was cured, Christ and his disciples were passing through the corn-fields, when some of the latter, being hungry, plucked some of the ears, and ate the grain after rubbing it out between their hands. Some Pharisees who were present seized hold of this incident, and asked, "Why do ye that which it is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day?" The reader conversant with the Law of Moses will marvel at this question, for there is certainly no law in the Books of Moses forbidding eating on the Sabbath-day, or forbidding the plucking of the ears of corn, or rubbing them in the hands. It arose from one of those preposterous refinements upon the law to which the Jews of that age were prone. Every simple prohibition of the law was traced out to its remotest associations, which were all deemed unlawful by the Pharisees, which is another name for persons strongly given to such refinements, and who deemed the observance of them essential matters of the law. The act of the disciples they would consider as forbidden by the law (Exod. xx. 10): "Thou shalt do *no manner of work* on the Sabbath-day." Now plucking the corn they regarded as a manner of work, a sort of reaping or of plucking up corn—which is a mode in which it was gathered among them; nor was this all, for the rubbing with the hands they held to be also a manner of work, of the same nature and equivalent to the threshing of corn.

The remark made to the disciples was answered by Jesus himself, with one of his usual arguments, namely, that even assuming that such acts were contrary to the law, *he* had a power above the law, and was not bound by the restrictions which it imposed. In this case he alluded to the case of David, who, without blame, ate, when hungry, of the shew-bread, which it was most decidedly unlawful for any but the priests to eat. He also pointed out that, according to their view, the very priests, in the sacrificial acts of their sacred service, constantly profaned the Sabbath-day, and yet were blameless. If they enjoyed such exemption, how much more he, who was greater than even the temple by which their priestly acts were consecrated. In conclusion Jesus added;—"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: therefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath." All this is more precisely levelled at particular Jewish notions than we can find room to explain. But it must be understood that the last expression amounted to an explicit claim to be regarded as the Messiah; for it was believed by the Jews themselves that the Messiah was Lord of the Sabbath, and that in his day all that was burdensome in its observance would be removed. The gist of the argument, therefore, is, "I am the Messiah; and I claim the privileges which you admit to belong to that character." Luke vi. 1—5; Mark ii. 25—28; Mat. xii. 4—7.

The same day, apparently, our Lord attended at one of the Synagogues in Jerusalem. There was conspicuously present a man whose hand was withered, and the Pharisees present, now fully alive to his views in a matter which they deemed so essential, watched him closely to observe his course of action, in order that they might, if possible, find some ground of accusation against him in the Sanhedrim. Perceiving this, Jesus told the man to stand forward; on which the Pharisees, unable to contain themselves, asked, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day?" This seems a most preposterous question, and such it was; but we have already explained the view on which it was founded. Christ answered by referring to a case which the law itself declared to be legal (Exod. xxiii. 4, 5; Deut. xxii. 4):—"What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day, will he not lay hold on it and lift it out?—how much then is a man better than a sheep?" They could not answer this; and Jesus, after looking around upon them with righteous indignation, bade the man stretch forth his shrunk-up hand. That hand, powerless so long, no longer refused to obey his will; he stretched it forth sound and perfect as the other.

On this the Pharisees left the place in high exasperation; this act having been the first which was performed contrary to and in defiance of their previous remonstrances. They then first began to consult with the Herodians how they might destroy him. These Herodians seem to have been a political party, anxious to secure for Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee, the regal titles and powers which had been enjoyed by Herod the Great, and who, therefore, had just the same grounds for resisting the claim of Jesus to be regarded as the Messiah, which had at a former time induced the elder Herod to seek the destruction of the heaven-born "King of the Jews."

The time for Jesus to suffer death had, however, not yet come; his mission on earth was not yet accomplished; and therefore he left Judea, attended by his disciples, and returned to the borders of the Lake of Gennesareth. In this journey he was followed by crowds of people, anxious to hear him and to see his mighty works—not only from Jerusalem and Judea, and from the remote parts of Galilee, but from Idumæa, the region beyond the river Jordan, and even from Phœnicia.

Besides the thronging of this mixed multitude around the Saviour whenever he appeared in public, those who were afflicted with diseases pressed close around him, in the hope that, if they might but touch him, the virtue which transpired from his sacred person would suffice to accomplish their cure. The inconvenience of this became at length so urgent, that it was arranged with the disciples, who had been fishermen at this place, that a boat should be in attendance on the shore to receive him when incommoded by the crowd.

Jesus had now returned to Capernaum, which has more than once been indicated as his usual place of residence when in Galilee. The crowds by which he was followed from day to day, wherever he appeared, made more dear to him the solitude, meet for prayer and meditation, which he could only secure by withdrawing secretly from the town, and remaining all night in the neighbouring mountains and wildernesses. Often in those days—

> "Cold mountains and the midnight air
> Witness'd the fervour of his prayer."

We are told of one night in which he thus withdrew to a mountain, and "continued all night in prayer to God." This was preparatory to the nomination of the twelve apostles; and if He who was "without sin" found it desirable to precede a measure of this importance with earnest prayer, how much more should we, who are compassed about with infirmity on every side, imitate the example here set before us.

The selection of twelve from among his more constant followers, to be always with him, and to act in his name, was dictated by many important considerations; the chief of which seems to have been that they, being ever about him, hearing all he said and seeing all he did, might, after his decease, become competent witnesses of his whole course of life and action; and be so well instructed in the things of God, as to carry on the work which it was his commission only to commence. The persons chosen included the six who had been already called to follow Christ, namely, the brothers Peter and Andrew; the brothers John and James; Philip, and Matthew: and six whose names have not before occurred—Bartholomew (supposed to be the same with Nathaniel); James and Jude, sons of Alphæus and first cousins of Christ, on which account they are sometimes called his "brethren." Their mother appears to have been a sister of the Virgin Mary. The others were Thomas, surnamed Didymus, or the "twin;" Simon, surnamed Zelotes; and Judas, surnamed Iscariot



307.—Ears of Wheat.
Tywys Gwenith.



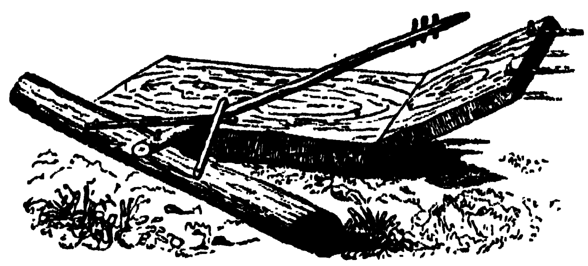
309.—Harvest in Palestine.
Cynhauaf yn Palestina.



308.—Ears of Wheat.
Tywys Gwenith.



310.—Threshing by the Drag.
Dyrnu gyd â Men.



311.—Threshing Drag of Syria and Asia Minor
Men Ddyrnu Syria ac Asia Leiaf.



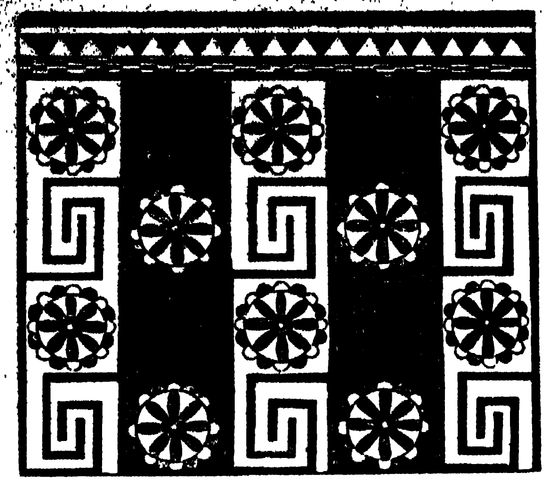
314.—Christ healing the Sick. (West.)
Grist yn iachâu'r Claf.

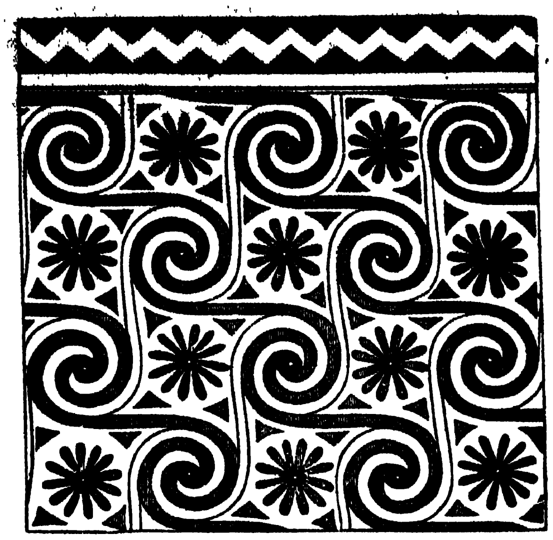


313.—Threshing by Animals.
Dyrnu âg Anifeiliaid.



312.—Threshing by the Sledge.
Dyrnu gyd â'r [illegible]

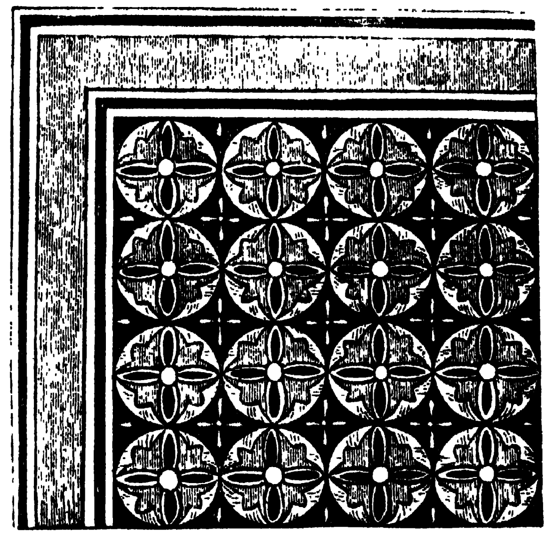




315, 316.—Patterns of Egyptian Mosaic.—Isa. liv.
Cynlluniau o Frithwaith Aiphtaidd.

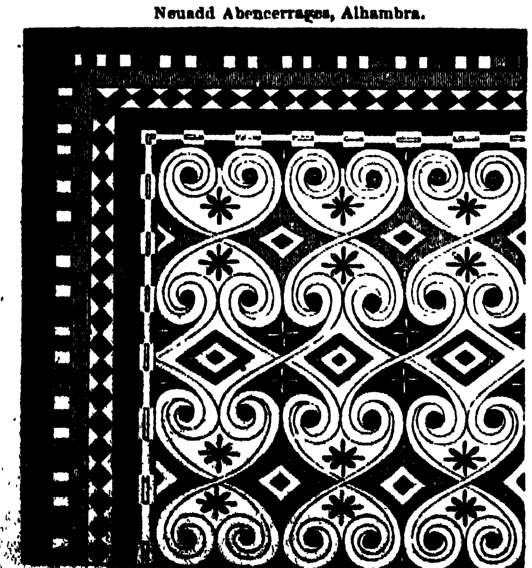


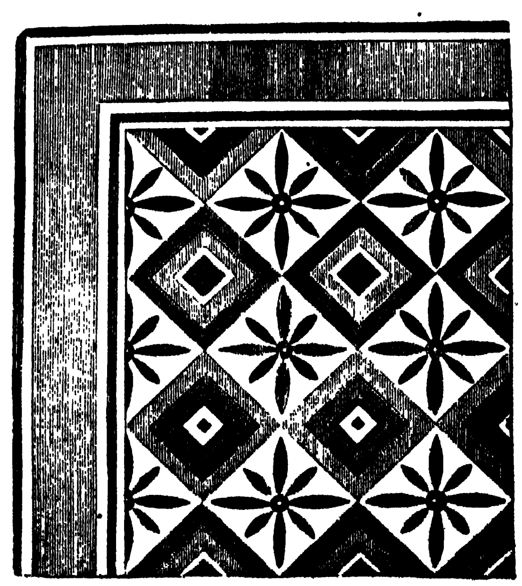
321. –Hall of Abencerrages, Alhambra.
Neuadd Abencerrages, Alhambra.





317, 318.—Patterns of Egyptian Mosaic.—Isa. liv.
Cynlluniau o Frithwaith Aiphtaidd.





319, 320.—Patterns of Egyptian Mosaic.—Isa. liv.
Cynlluniau o Frithwaith Aiphtaidd.

SUNDAY XII.—THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

ISAIAH L.—LXVI.

THESE chapters contain several allusions to the interior decorations of houses, to which chiefly our attention will be here directed.

In chap. liv. 11, the church of God is compared, by implication, to a ruined building, which He will rebuild with greater magnificence than it anciently possessed. In following out this image, details are introduced, evidently borrowed from the more splendid erection of the time. First, he says, "Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours:" and here the margin of our Bibles refers us to 1 Chron. xxix. 2, where we read that among the materials for the temple which were laid up by David, were "stones of divers colours." As the colour was here in the stone itself, we may conclude it to have been porphyry, which, as we now know, might have been obtained in any quantity, and very fine colours, from the mountains of Seir. But in the present text the tenor of the sentence conveys the notion that the colour was laid *upon* the stone. As this seems rather a strange practice, some Biblical translators have sought to avoid this meaning, and to find some other in the phrase. But there is really nothing to call for or warrant this recourse, as the practice of painting interior walls, even of stone, as well as ceilings, is now recognised as an ancient practice, especially among the Egyptians. That people painted in brilliant and in "divers" colours even their granite columns and sculpture in stone. "The walls and ceilings," says Sir J. G. Wilkinson, "were richly painted, and frequently with admirable taste; but of their effect we can judge only from those of the tombs, where they are preserved far more perfectly than in the houses." The ceilings are more than once alluded to in Scripture as being, in the higher class of dwellings, of cedar, which, from Jer. xxii. 14, would appear to have been sometimes painted, which, according to the above quotation, was also an Egyptian custom. The ceilings were, among that people, laid out in compartments, each having a pattern with an appropriate border. The favourite forms were the lotus, the square, the diamond, and the circle, and above all a succession of scrolls, and of square within square. Decorations of this kind occur in times so early as the residence of the Hebrews in Egypt. When colour was applied to stone in that country, the stone was first covered with a kind of plaster or stucco, better suited than the naked stone to receive and retain the colour. This practice, with which the Hebrews could not be unacquainted, perhaps affords the best explanation which can be given of Deut. xxvii. 3, a passage which used greatly to perplex the commentators. There we find Moses directing that when the Israelites came to the Mounts Ebal and Gerizim, they should "take great stones, and plaster them with plaster, and write upon them all the words of this law." That is, the stones were plastered in order that the words might be the better and more legibly written on them.

The text proceeds—"I will lay thy foundation with sapphires." Here, and in some other similar texts, we very much incline to think that a pavement rather than a foundation is meant. In that case the image may be derived from the coloured marbles of which such pavements were sometimes formed: and when stones of different colours are specified, the allusion may be to a pavement formed of differently coloured stones, and, if differently coloured, doubtless arranged in some pattern which would display them to advantage. Probably "the pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black marble" in the palace court of King Ahasuerus was of this kind. This practice of paving in mosaic is now seldom seen in the courts of Oriental dwellings, but is confined to the paved gallery into which the principal apartments of the house open, or to that part of it which is immediately in front of the principal room—the receiving room. From the specimen in the page of engravings it will be seen that these mosaics are often very complicated and composed of numerous minute parts.

Since much of the next verse (12th) appears to refer to the application of ornamental stones to walls, it may be proper to remark that the walls in great Oriental palaces are very often adorned in the principal rooms with magnificent mosaics. The magnificent Arabian palace, the Alhambra in Granada, affords many fine examples of this. Thus, in the hall of Abencerrages, the walls, from the floor to the spring of the arches which compose the magnificent roof, are covered with most elegant mosaics, and, as in the description of the prophet, "all the borders are of pleasant stones." In these mosaics, however, as in the present palaces of Western Asia, porcelain is often the substitute of marble. In the Alhambra the pavement of the principal chambers appears to have been formed originally with mosaics, and even the columns covered with the same, but most of this has been destroyed.

The allusion in this verse (the 12th) to "windows of agates," must be understood in the same connection. Where the practice of interior decorations, which have been here described, exists, the height of the art is reserved for the windows, where the marble-like stucco is often laid out in patterns of foliage, something like the head-pieces of old books, in which case the flowers or fruits are not seldom represented by stones of price. The other raised parts of the work representing the stems and leaves are displayed in the same manner with colours and gilding. This kind of wreathed and flowered work is also often seen in borders and cornices.

With reference to these passages generally, it is remarked in the Pictorial Bible (liv. 12), that "The idea of a palace of unexampled magnificence—founded on the known style of ornament, but so aggrandised that supernatural power was required to give effect to the intention—is strikingly displayed in the well-known Eastern tale of Aladdin, who thus gives his instructions:—'I leave the choice of materials to you, that is to say, porphyry, jasper, agate, lapis lazuli, and *the finest marbles of the most varied colours.* But I expect that in the highest story of the palace you will build me a large hall with a dome and four equal fronts; and that instead of layers of brick, the walls be made of massy gold and silver, laid alternately; and that each front shall contain six windows, the lattices of all of which, except one which must be left unfinished and imperfect, shall be so enriched with art and symmetry, with *diamonds, rubies, and emeralds*, that they shall exceed everything of the kind ever known in the world.'"

The "gates of carbuncles" appear to us to contain a very manifest allusion to the Eastern custom of using doors of stone. This is not, indeed, so usual a custom now as it appears to have been in ancient times. It is remarkable that such doors occur nowhere more frequently than in Palestine. There they occur chiefly in the more grand sepulchres, perhaps because in other cases they have perished with the buildings to which they belonged. In the so-called Tombs of the Kings near Jerusalem the doors of the several chambers were each formed of a single stone, seven inches thick, sculptured so as to represent four panels, and resembling in all respects a door made by a carpenter at the present day. That such doors were not confined to sepulchres is evinced by the stone doors of the ancient dwellings which still exist in the country of the Haouran, beyond the river Jordan. These are sometimes of one piece, and sometimes folding doors; they turn upon hinges worked out of the stone, and are about four inches thick, and seldom higher than about four feet, though some of upwards of nine feet in height have been met with.

In the way of general illustration nothing can be more appropriate than what Murphy, in his *Arabian Antiquities of Spain*, says of the general style of the interior decorations of the Alhambra:—"The Arabesque paintings and mosaics, which are finished with great care and accuracy, give a consequence and interest even to the smallest apartments. Instead of being papered and wainscoted, the walls are covered with Arabesques which had been cast in moulds in a peculiar manner, and afterwards joined together, although no separation appears. The receding ornaments are illuminated in just gradations with leaf gold, pink, light blue, and dusky purple; the first colour is the nearest, the last the most distant from the eye, but the general surface is white. A multitude of sculptures of unequal projection creates confusion; an error avoided in this place, where the *ornaments* are produced by *incision*, and their boundless number excites an artificial infinity. Externally, where projections are necessary, the line of continuity is uniformly preserved in every distinct series of parts. The domes and arcades are also formed of ornamented casts, which are almost as light as wood and as durable as marble; specimens of the composition of which they are formed may be seen in the early works of the Arabs, uninjured after the lapse of ten centuries. The lower parts of the walls, to the height of about four feet, are covered with porcelain mosaics of various figures and colours, and it appears, from a few remaining specimens, that the floors and columns of some of the apartments were also covered with similar mosaics."

SUNDAY XII.—BIBLE HISTORY.

THE altar was placed at the east end of the court, fronting the entrance of the tabernacle. It was made of shittim-wood overlaid with brass. It was furnished with four rings, through which were inserted the poles by which, in removal, it was borne upon the shoulders of the priests. The fire by which the sacrifices were consumed was kept upon a square grate, suspended by rings at the corners, and possibly by chains in the cavity of the altar. The fire upon this altar having at first been kindled from heaven, was considered as peculiarly holy; and it was therefore kept continually burning, and never allowed to be extinguished.

The brazen laver was placed between the altar and the tabernacle. It was made with the metal "mirrors" (erroneously called "looking-glasses," in the authorized version) of the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. We are not informed of its shape or size, but it appears to have been large, since it was for the use of all the priests, to wash their hands and feet while engaged in the duties of the tabernacle.

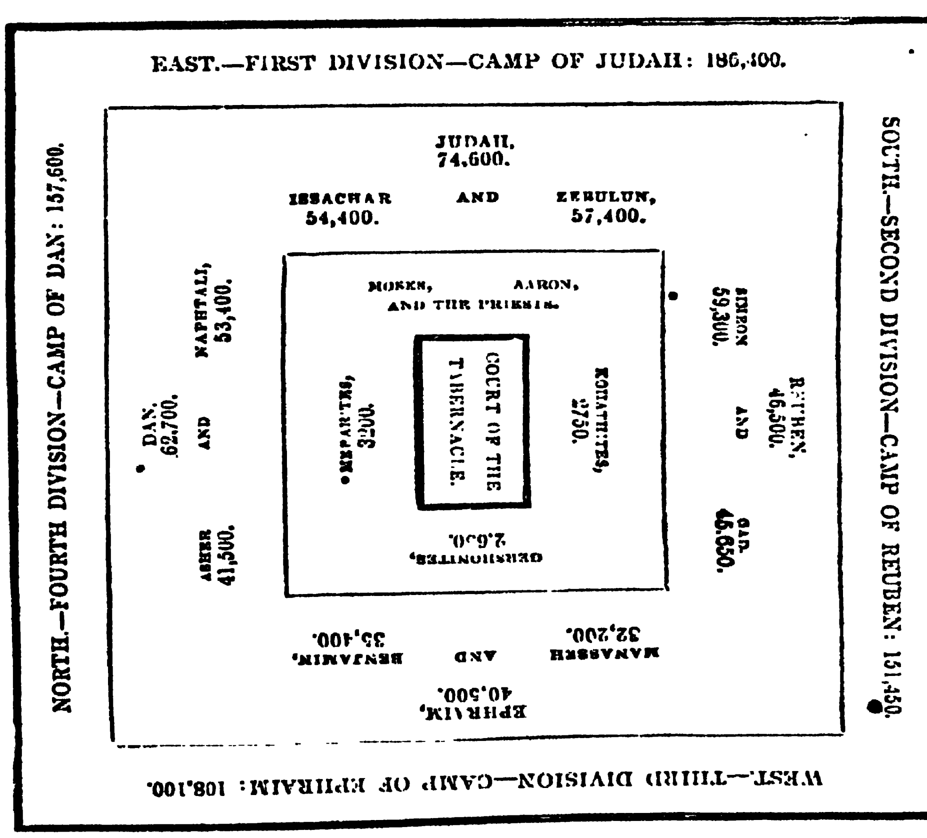
Such was the tabernacle, which we are to regard as a temple or chapel expressly adapted to the condition of a migratory people, and abundantly making up, by the extreme richness of its materials, for the lack of that stateliness of fabric which its peculiar purpose rendered impossible.

To give an idea of the extreme richness of this fabric, it may be proper to give a rough estimate of the cost of the materials employed in its construction, according to their present value.

Gold, 29 talents and 730 shekels, at 4*l*. per oz. .	£175,460
Silver, 100 talents and 1775 shekels, at 5*s*. per oz.	37,722
Brass, or rather copper, 212,400 shekels, at 1*s*. 3*d*. per lb.	138
	£213,320

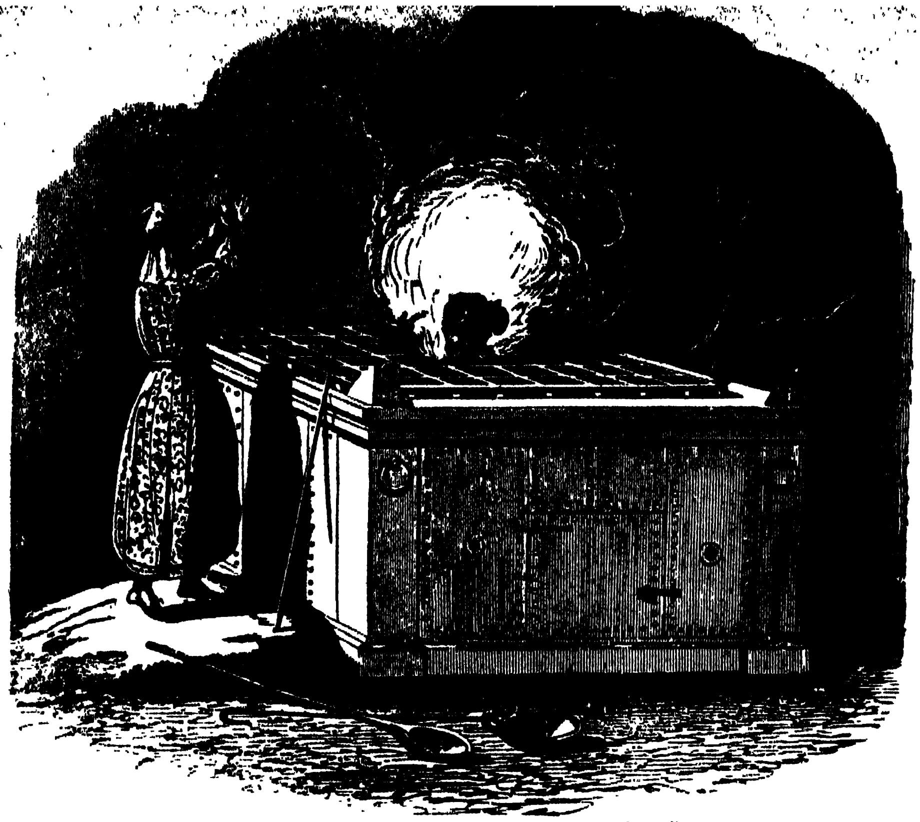
This is the cost of the metals alone; and a very moderate allowance for the jewelled dress of the high priest, the dresses of the other priests, the secondary materials, and the workmanship of the whole, would raise the full amount to about 250,000*l*.; a prodigious sum to be expended on so small a structure.

This tabernacle occupied the centre of the vast Hebrew camp, the centre being always the place of the chief in every Oriental camp. A most beautiful system of orderly encampment and of movement was soon organised around it; and could a spectator have taken in the whole of it from some lofty eminence, a most interesting spectacle would have been presented to his view. We only know of one whose feeling on thus beholding is recorded; and the scene extorted from his not too friendly breast the exclamation, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob; and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens, by the river side, as the trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters" (Num. xxiv. 5, 6). These comparisons are striking, and such as would naturally occur to an Eastern mind. The lanes between the orderly rows of tents are compared to valleys and to the channels in a watered garden; and the tents themselves to trees growing along these valleys and beside these waters. Some idea of the just effect of this comparison may be seen, by a reference to the cut representing a watered garden at p. 17. The following plan will give a clearer notion of the general distribution of the camp than could be realized by written description.



Here it will be observed that a large area was left in the centre of the camp, formed by the tabernacle court, and by the space left between the wall of the sacred enclosure and the general camp. This distance is considerable, and in Eastern camps is always proportioned to the respect intended to be shown, or, in other words, to the rank of the personage stationed in the centre. In such camps the area is not, however, left wholly vacant, but is occupied by the tents of the officers of the court (if the king be present), and of other great personages. So in the present case, the area contained on the east side the tents of Moses and Aaron, and of the priests who were the sons of the latter. On the other sides, enclosing the tabernacle like a guard of honour, were the Levites in three great divisions; the Gershonites on the west, the Merarites on the north, and the Kohathites on the south.

Beyond this area were the tents of the twelve tribes, who encamped three on each side, under their several banners. The three together formed one great camp, named after the leading tribe, namely, the camp of Judah, containing the tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun, in all 186,400 adult males with their families, on the east; the camp of Ephraim, containing the tribes of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin, together 108,100 men, on the west: the camp of Dan, comprising the tribes of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali, 157,600 men, on the north; and the camp of Reuben, containing the tribes of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad, 151,450 men, on the south. This must have been in fact a great town of tents, with lanes and squares, and covering a vast extent of ground. The Jewish writers affirm that the circumference of the entire camp was about twelve miles, and this does not seem an exaggerated



324.—Altar of Burnt Offering.—Exod. xxvii.
Allor y Poeth-Offrwm.



325.—Costume of the High-Priest.—Exod. xxviii.
Gwisg yr Archoffeiriad.



322.—Bas-relief from the Arch of Titus.—Exod. xxv.
Breslun oddi ar Fwa Titus.



323.—Setting up the Tabernacle.—Exod. xxvi.
Gosodiad y Tabernacl i fyny.



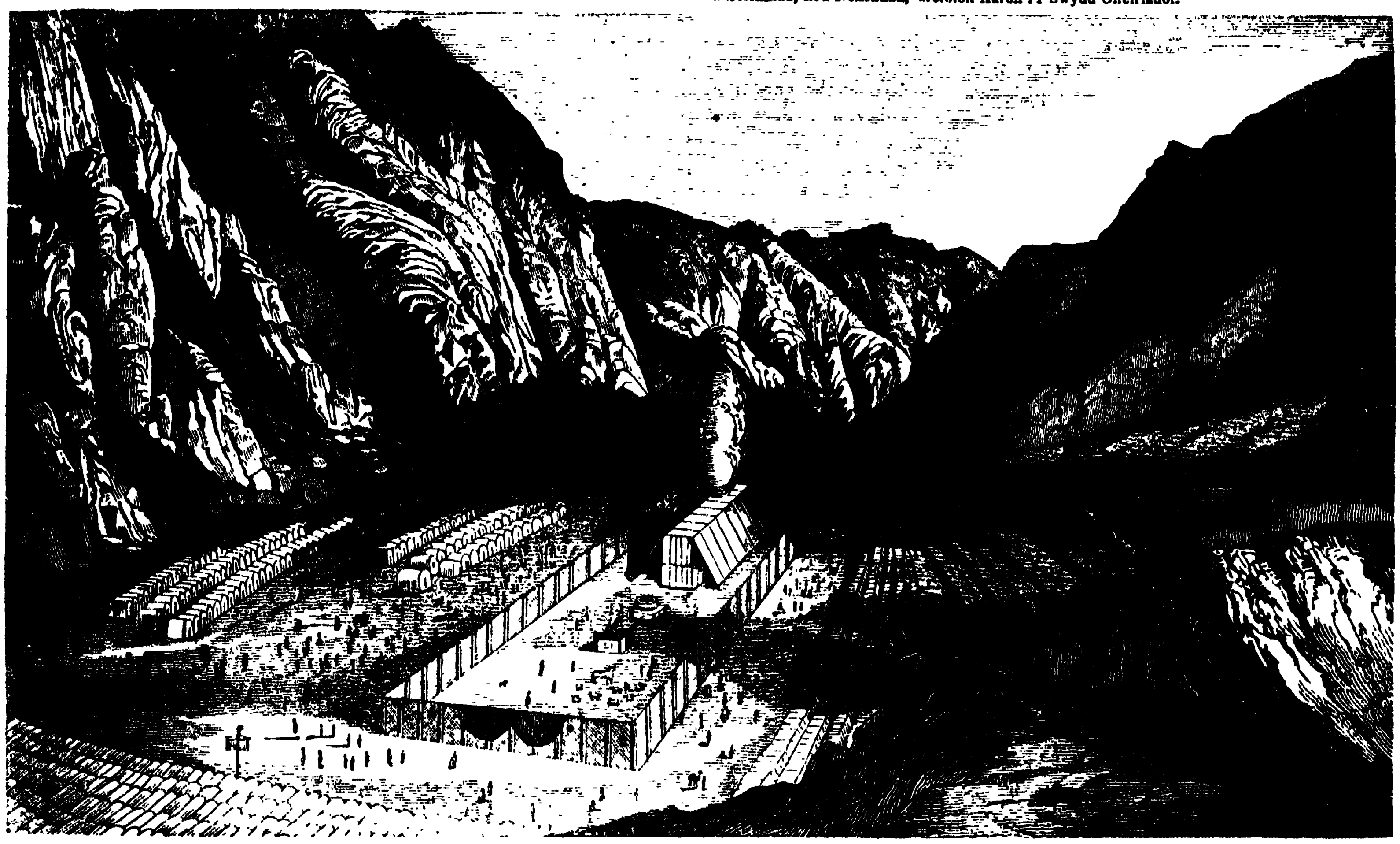
326.—Costume of an Aaronite or Priest.—Exod. xxviii.
Gwisg Aaroniad neu Offeiriad.



330.—Cinnamon.—Exod. xxx 23.
Sinnamon.



331.—Sanctification, or Setting apart, of the Sons of Aaron to the Priestly Office. (Raffaelle.)—Exod. xl.
Sancteiddiad, neu Neillduad, Meibion Aaron i'r Swydd Offeiriadol.



327.—Tabernacle and Encampment of Israel in the Wilderness.—Exod. xxvii.
Y Tabernacl a Gwersyllfa Israel yn yr Anialwch.





329.—Frankincense.
Thus.

estimate when we take into account the large hollow square in the centre, and the vast extent of ground which tents for the accommodation of above two millions of people would require.

The movement of so vast an encampment must seem to European readers a difficult and laborious operation. But it was not so. The perfect order of all the arrangements rendered the removal a matter of facility and expedition, when the extent of the operation is considered. The constant habit among the Orientals of moving only in large bodies, still leaves them a degree of ease in the forming and breaking up a camp, which is surprising to European travellers; and this must have been still more admirable in a camp so carefully organised as that of the Israelites. Indeed we are not left in any doubt on this point, as the whole process of removal is somewhat minutely described.

The movements of the camp were regulated by the pillar of cloud, which rested over that part of the tabernacle in which the ark was contained. When it was seen to move, the preparation for departure immediately commenced; and on the march the great body followed the course which it indicated, and encamped where it rested.

While the people were striking their tents, and preparing for the signal to start, the priests entered the tabernacle and covered up all the sacred things in several enveloping cloths; for although the Levites (of the Kohathite branch) were to carry the sacred utensils, they were not allowed to touch them on pain of death. The tabernacle was taken down, and its parts properly packed up for removal, as well as the hangings and pillars which formed the enclosure of the court. All the draperies were under the charge of the Gershonites, and all the boards and pillars in the care of the Merarites. In removal, the sacred utensils, such as the ark, the candlestick, the two altars, and the table of shew-bread, and the laver, were borne by poles upon the shoulders of the Kohathites; but the boards, poles, and coverings of the tabernacle and enclosure were removed in waggons or carts drawn by oxen, two to each waggon. The Gershonites, whose burden was the lightest, had two waggons and four oxen; but the more ponderous charge of the Merarites required four waggons and eight oxen.

All being ascertained to be in readiness, the silver trumpets, made for the purpose of giving signals, were sounded by the Levites, and the bearers of the ark moved forward, followed by the three tribes of the camp of Judah. Then the waggons moved on with the cloths and boards of the tabernacle; and while these were on their march the trumpet sounded again, on which the standard of Reuben's camp advanced with the three tribes belonging to it. Then came the Kohathites bearing the sacred utensils; and these were followed by the standard of Ephraim's camp with the three tribes belonging to it; and lastly, the three tribes under the standard of Dan brought up the rear. At the first movement Moses used to say, "Arise, O Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let those that hate thee flee before thee." And when the ark rested, he would say, "Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel."

We have given this connected account of all that belonged to the tabernacle for the sake of bringing the matter under one view; and have been content to imply the presence of the priests and Levites, the living agents and ministers of the great and splendid theocratical establishment of which the tabernacle formed the central object.

In ancient times it had been usual for the chief of the family to officiate as priest for himself [illegible] people; and in communities the sheikh, prince, or king exercised the priestly functions on public occasions. Hence in some ancient languages, the Hebrew included, the same word means both "prince" and "priest." We find this the case in the patriarchal history. When the first-born of Egypt were destroyed, and the first-born of Israel spared, the Lord directed, in memory of this, that thenceforth the first-born of men and animals should be set apart for his service, and considered as consecrated to him. The animals, if of the kinds fit for sacrifice, were sacrificed upon the altar; but if unfit, they were redeemed by the owner. Under this regulation the first-born sons, therefore, would naturally have become the priests and servitors of the tabernacle, had no alteration been subsequently made. When the theocratical establishment was organized, the first-born were relieved from their obligation, or rather it was reduced to a mere form, and the whole tribe of Levi was taken in exchange for entire and hereditary devotement to the sacred services. The Levites thus became the court, the body guard, the immediate servants of the Great King. A whole tribe could not be priests, and it was requisite that one family should be selected for the higher services of the theocratical government and worship, and become the governing body of the whole. The family of Aaron was honoured with this distinction, Aaron being nominated the high priest, and his sons priests. Moses had sons of his own, and they remained simple Levites; nor do the descendants of the great lawgiver make any figure in subsequent times, as do the descendants of Aaron.

In virtue of this appointment, the tribe of Levi was excluded from any share in the territory of the Promised Land; but in political and territorial arrangements the number twelve was still preserved by the descendants of Joseph being, through his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh, counted as two tribes.

The Levites being thus deprived of the provision from the soil which the other tribes were to enjoy, were to have instead certain towns among the different tribes assigned them for their abode, and their subsistence was to be secured out of the various dues which were to be rendered to the Divine King as the sovereign proprietor of the soil, and from which his servants were to be maintained, and the dignity of his court upheld.

The priests did not wear any distinctive dress when not actually on duty at the tabernacle; but when on service their dress was remarkable, and is described with considerable minuteness in the book of Exodus. That of the high priest was truly magnificent; and, under different interpretations of the details, has been imitated more or less in the official array of the different pontiffs of Christendom.

The priests were arrayed in what our version describes as a coat of fine white linen embroidered, and which may be more exactly described in the words of Josephus, who himself had worn it, as "a tunic fitting close to the body, with tight sleeves for the arms, and reaching down to the heels." They also wore linen drawers, which do not seem to have been in general use. The actual presence of drawers reaching to below the middle of the thigh, upon various figures in the Egyptian paintings and sculptures, seems to set at rest some discussion concerning this article of priestly raiment, which some had fancied a kind of bandage, and others had transformed into trousers. Around the waist was the girdle, which is described as a long piece of fine-twined linen, wrought with blue, purple, and scarlet needlework. That the girdle is and was an indispensable article of Eastern dress sufficiently accounts for its presence in the priestly raiment, without the special and peculiar reasons which some have laboured to find. The head was covered by a kind of bonnet, or turban, which seems to have been composed of several rolls of linen twisted close about the head.

All these articles of dress, except the last, were worn also by the high priest, the distinctive parts of his attired to it. The garments of the priests, when they became old, were unravelled to furnish wicks for the lamps of the golden candlestick; but we are not informed what became of the old raiment of the high priest.

The articles of dress and ornament peculiar to the high priest, and indicative of his high station, were:—

1. *The Robe of the Ephod*, a garment which was worn over the white gown common to all the priests, and under the ephod. This robe of the ephod was of linen, of a sky-blue colour, extending from the neck to the feet, all of one piece, or without seam. It had an opening at the top for the head to pass through, and at the sides for the arms, for there were no sleeves; and at the bottom were tassels of blue, purple, and scarlet, in the form of pomegranates, interspersed with small golden bells, the tinkling of which, as the pontiff moved, announced his approach when he entered the holy place, and apprised the people of his coming when he returned.

2. *The Ephod* was over this. It consisted of a rich and beautiful cloth, composed of blue, purple, scarlet, and fine-twined linen interwoven with threads of gold. It formed a loose upper garment, sleeveless, and reaching from the shoulders to below the loins. It was fastened to the body by bindings above the shoulders and around the middle. The bindings above the shoulders had the name of "shoulder-pieces:" they appear to have been formed of the same kind of cloth as the ephod, and they had an ouch or socket of gold on the top of each shoulder, in which, as in a seal, were set two onyx stones with the names of the children of Israel engraven on them. The letters of the names were so divided, we are told, as to make twenty-five on each shoulder, for which purpose Joseph's name was extended to Jehoseph. From these sockets wreathed chains of gold were extended to join that and the ephod together.

Connected with this was "the curious girdle of the ephod," which, passing underneath the arms, fastened the ephod to the breast-plate below. It was composed of the same materials as the ephod.

SUNDAY XII.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

A GREAT multitude, composed as usual, and brought together by the usual motives, had by this time gathered to Jesus in the open country. Perceiving this, he ascended an eminence, and there delivered the famous Sermon on the Mount.

That which is supposed to be the mount from which this sermon was delivered, is now called by Christians the Mount of Beatitudes. It is described in the Geography (p. 427), and there is nothing to allege against its being actually the mount in question; but there is as little to urge for it. The Evangelists specify no particular mountain, and there are near the lake perhaps a dozen other mountains which would answer just as well to the circumstances of the history.

But the Sermon itself:—who can speak of these Divine words according to their claims upon our admiration and respect? How different from all that the philosophers and poets of the heathen taught!—and how different even from the teaching of the ancient Hebrew prophets!—and, above all, how different in spirit and essential matter from the mean talk and petty questions with which the great Jewish doctors of that age amused their disciples! No wonder that this new style of teaching attracted such multitudes to hear Jesus; and drew from them, on more than one occasion, the acknowledgment that never man spake like him.

The scope of this discourse is to correct the false notions which the Jews entertained concerning the Messiah's kingdom, and to teach what kind of happiness was to be expected from it, and to describe the dispositions which were necessary to its attainment. Of the multitude which Jesus addressed, a great part were men of mean station and humble circumstances, held in contempt by the rulers, the priests, and the Pharisees. Many of them, perhaps all of them, expected from the Messiah—and, in acknowledging Christ to be the Messiah, expected from him—at least the blessings promised by Moses, affluence, prosperity, and whatever is thought promotive of worldly well being. But of that there seemed little hope from Jesus, as those who had hitherto followed him were not, in that respect, in any very enviable condition. Our Lord therefore teaches them what was to be expected and aimed at by those who should submit themselves to his direction. In order, too, that he might render his hearers the more attentive, and that they might the better remember his utterances, he, conformably to Eastern custom, propounds his doctrine by certain paradoxes, which seem at first sight false, but on examination turn out to be true. In this discourse also he advances in a very marked manner his claim to be considered as a Legislator, not only equal to Moses, but superior to him. The Jews allowed that the Messiah would be greater than Moses, and, therefore, in advancing this claim, Jesus declares himself the Messiah, and was so understood. It is often supposed that Christ here comes forward to explain what the Law of Moses really meant—thus making himself in fact a commentator on that law: but it may rather appear that he refers to the Law of Moses in order to illustrate by particular examples the superiority of the new doctrine which he came to teach—of the new law which he came to promulgate. So when he says, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,' but *I* say unto you that ye resist not evil," he surely does not mean to develop any inner meaning of the old law which he cites, but to produce a new and better law of his own.

It seems very certain that in delivering this discourse Jesus had in view the city of Saphet, which is seated upon the summit of a tall and very steep mountain, where it seems perched high in air, and scarcely accessible to mortal foot. In fact this mountain and city must have been visible from almost any point of the locality in which the Sermon was delivered. This fact gives much force to some of the allusions in the Sermon, as, "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid" (Matt. v. 14); and above all to the magnificent conclusion of the discourse:—"Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened to a foolish man who built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Matt. vii. 24—27).

Jesus then returned to Capernaum, where an incident awaited him different in character from any which had yet occurred. It seems that there was a garrison of Roman soldiers stationed in or near this place, one of whose officers—perhaps the officer in command—was a centurion (captain of a hundred men), who entertained towards the Jews a kind feeling, and for their religion a respect, by no means common among the Roman legions. He had even built for the people at Capernaum the synagogue in which they worshipped, and in which they had heard the words of Christ and seen his miracles. This centurion had a favourite slave, who had fallen dangerously ill, and for whom he experienced great concern. Having heard—for who had not heard?—of the wonderful cures performed by Christ, hope for his beloved servant arose within him. He was filled with a far more exalted idea of the person and character of Jesus than the Jews themselves entertained; and, diffident of obtaining attention from him, he persuaded the chief Jews of the place to apply on his behalf, and to say that for him which he could not say for himself. They did so, saying that he was worthy for whom he should do this, "for he loveth our nation and hath built us a synagogue." Then Jesus went with them to the centurion's house: but before they reached it, came a message from the centurion—saying, "Give not thyself this trouble: I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof; nor did I deem myself worthy to come in person to thee: but speak one word only, and my servant will be well." Jesus was much struck by this. The Jews admitted his power to heal, but deemed it needful that he should be personally present and touch the diseased person with his hand. But here was a foreigner, a heathen, who had the faith—who believed that a word from Christ, spoken in the absence of the diseased person, would suffice to effect the cure. Christ therefore turned round to the people who followed him, and said, "I have not found such great faith—no, not in Israel;" and he added, "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness" This is to us a very intelligible allusion to the calling of the Gentiles and the rejection of the Jews: but to the people it was obscure; and as they probably interpreted it to mean that many such heathen would become proselytes to Judaism, it did not give the offence with which some of our Lord's later and plainer declarations on this point were received.

The friends who had brought to Jesus the message of the centurion returned to the house, and found that he had received the reward of his faith in the perfect recovery of his servant.

The day after this Jesus proceeded to Nain, thirteen miles to the south of the place where the Sermon on the Mount is supposed to have been delivered. This was then a place of some consequence, but has now dwindled to a small hamlet under the name of Nein. On approaching the gate of this town the crowd which attended our Lord was met by another, probably as numerous, issuing from the city. It was the becoming custom of the Jews to bury their dead outside the towns: nor was this peculiar to them, but common to all the nations of the East and West, until the present pernicious custom of burying in or near churches, first introduced in honour of the martyrs, was extended into general use. The crowd which issued from the gate of Nain was in attendance upon the funeral of a young man, the only son of a poor woman, and her only stay—for she was a widow. The attendance was so great on account of the number of persons who were anxious to testify their sympathy and respect.

This scene was well calculated to move the compassion of him "who went about doing good;" and to lead him to do a greater work than any which he had yet performed. Full of Divine tenderness, he cheered the desolate mother, and said unto her, "Weep not;" and the bearers of the corpse he directed to lay down their melancholy burden. Among the Jews the dead were carried to the grave upon open biers, and not in closed coffins, the use of which was, in the time of our Lord, confined to the higher classes. Turning to the bier, Jesus said, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise!" The "dull cold ear of death" heard his voice; the youth rose up, and gave the most satisfactory proof of his restoration to consciousness and life by speaking to the persons around him. Jesus then consigned him to his mother. Who can tell the mysteries of human feeling with which that mother received that son from the dead, and held him once more in her embrace? Then indeed did the "widow's heart sing for joy"—a joy so great that in her case all wonder was doubtless absorbed in it.



332.—Christ exhorting his Disciples.
Crist yn cynghori ei Ddisgyblion.



333.—The Sermon on the Mount.
Y Bregeth ar y Mynydd.



337.—Roman Centurion.—Matt. viii.
Canwriad Rhufeinig.



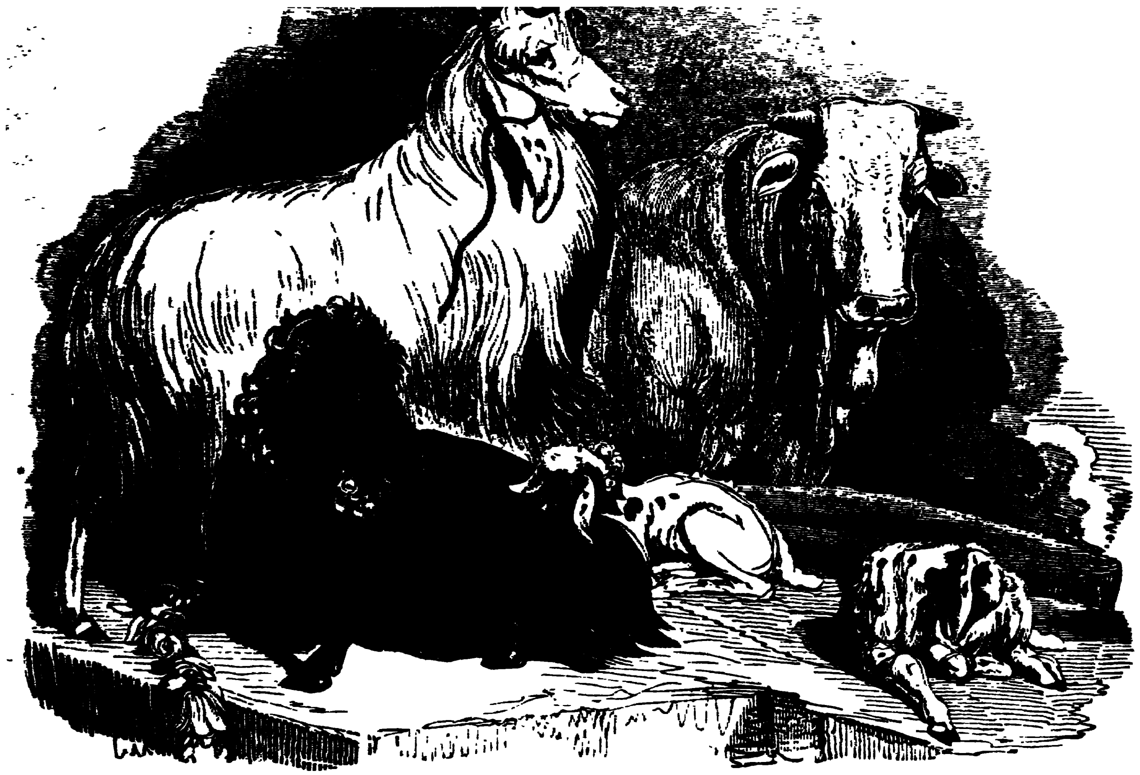
336.—Lily.—Matt. vi.
Lili.



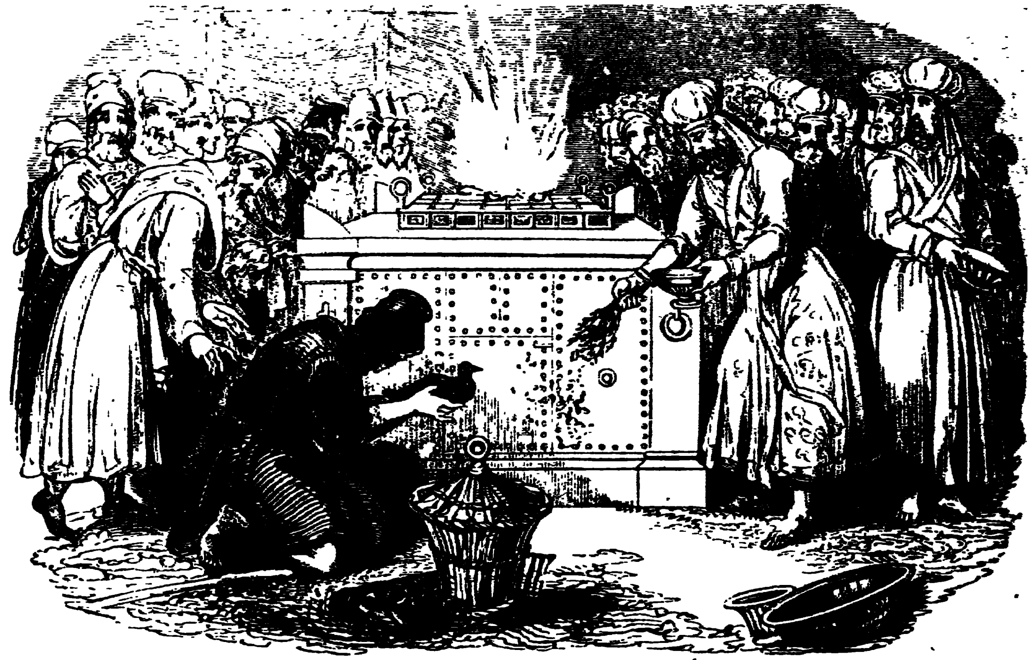
334.—Matt. v. 24.



[illegible]



343.—Scape-Goat and Young Bullock, Goat, and Kid of Goats, for Sin-Offering.—Lev. xvi
Bwch Diangol a Bustach Ieuangc, Bwch, a Myn Gafr, yn Pech-aberth.



342.—Trespass-Offering of the Poor. (Melville.)—Lev. v.
Aberth dros gamwedd y Tlawd.



344.—Aaron entering the Holy Place on the Day of Atonement, with the relative situations of the Candlestick, Altar of Incense, and Table of Shew-bread.—Lev. xxiii.
Aaron yn myned i'r Cyssegr Sancteiddiolaf ar Ddydd y Cymmod, gyda sefyllfa berthynasol y Canwyllbren, Allor yr Arogldarth, a Bwrdd y Bara Gosod.



345.—Bringing First-Fruits to Jerusalem.
Dwyn y Blaenffrwyth i Jerusalem.

SUNDAY XIII.—BIBLE HISTORY.

AS the *Breast-plate* was the most splendid article of the pontifical raiment, it claims more particular notice. It is described to have been a piece of embroidered cloth of the same stuff as the ephod. It was a span square when doubled, and was made thus strong that it might the better hold the precious stones which were set in it. It had a gold ring at each corner, from the two uppermost of which went two golden chains of wreathed work to meet the chains that came from the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, and fastened the one to the other; while from the two undermost rings of the breast-plate went two laces of blue to fasten it to two rings in "the curious girdle of the ephod." The breast-plate and the ephod, being thus attached to each other, might not on any account be separated. In the breast plate were set twelve precious stones, in four rows of three each, on each of which was engraven the name of one of the tribes of Israel. These engraven stones were intended not merely for ornament, but constantly to remind the high-priest that he bore with him and represented the interests of all the tribes, when he performed his sacred ministrations.

The engraving of these stones is said to have been "like the engraving of a signet" (Exod. xxviii. 11), and suggests some ideas in connection with an art which had doubtless been acquired in Egypt. The art of cutting precious stones was very early practised in that country. There are several necklaces of gold and cornelian in the new gallery of Egyptian antiquities in the British Museum, whose exquisite workmanship could scarcely be surpassed by modern artists, although, as we see from the engraving itself, the apparatus of the jeweller was as simple as could well be imagined. This is still the case in Hindostan, where the native jeweller, travelling from house to house with his little furnace and blowpipe, produces ornaments of considerable beauty. How very much genuine precious stones were valued in those early times is evinced by the circumstance that imitations of them were made in considerable quantities. The Theban artists were particularly distinguished in this employment of counterfeiting. As, then, we find it common among the Egyptians for the ornaments of the rich to be imitated in cheaper materials for the use of the poorer classes, it is very evident that the spirit of luxury, which belonged to an advanced state of civilization, was already at a very early period diffused among that people, and this gives every possible extrinsic evidence and historical propriety to the accounts contained in Scripture of the finer arts possessed by the Israelites when they quitted Egypt. That the art of the engraver, in particular, was native to that country, appears from the data which Wilkinson has furnished with regard to the Egyptian signets. Of many of them he gives engravings (see figures of some in our p. 29). There, for instance, is described the signet, yet preserved, of one of the earliest of the Pharaohs. On one side was the name of the king (the successor of Amunoph III.), who lived about 1400 B.C., and on the other a lion, with the legend "lord of strength," referring to the monarch; on one side a scorpion, on the other a crocodile. Various other inscriptions are found engraved on Egyptian rings.

Connected with the breast-plate was the mystery of the Urim and Thummim, by which the high-priest obtained responses from God, on which account the breast-plate itself was called "the breast-plate of judgment." The words are understood to mean *lights* and *perfections*. What is really denoted by them has been far more variously conjectured than we have room to state. The most general, and, upon the whole, the most probable opinion is that which identifies the Urim and Thummim with the stone of the breast-plate itself, and which holds that the names apply to the *instrumental uses* which they were made to subserve in the symbolical economy of the priesthood. The question, how the divine oracles were given through this ornament has been differently answered. The Jews believe that certain coruscations were emitted in succession from such of the letters in the breast-plate as would compose the response. To us it seems more probable that the question was framed so as to require only an affirmative or negative indication, which may have been conveyed by the presence or absence of certain irradiations upon the breast-plate, from the resplendence over the ark, which formed the symbol of the divine presence. This explanation seems open to none of the very weighty objections which have been urged against every other which has been produced.

4. The *Head-dress* of the high-priest was also a distinctive part of his attire. The linen "bonnet," indeed, was like that of the other priests; but, according to the description of Josephus, it had over it another of purple or violet colour, and a diadem of gold in three rows around that, which was finished at top with a small golden calyx about the size of a joint of the middle finger. This suggests the idea of something not unlike the turbans worn in the East at the present day. In front of this, fastened to the mitre by a lace of blue, was a golden plate, on which was engraven the remarkable words—HOLINESS TO THE LORD.

These articles constituted what was, properly speaking, the ordinary official dress of the high-priest: but he also had an extraordinary one for entering the holy of holies on the great day of atonement. This consisted of linen drawers, a linen gown, a linen girdle, and a linen mitre. These the Jews called his "white garments," and the others they called his "garments of gold."

It will be noticed that in the above description of the priestly raiment there is no account of shoes or sandals. This was because all the ministrations were performed with naked feet; it being then, as now, usual in the East to stand barefoot in the presence of a superior as a mark of respect, or when engaged in any devotional act of sacred ministration.

Aaron and his sons were consecrated with purifying rites and much solemnity by Moses; and eight days after—the tabernacle and its furniture having meanwhile undergone a similar ceremony—the priests entered upon their sacred ministrations. They began to burn incense upon the altar, laid out the shew-bread, and offered various sacrifices. At the same time it pleased the Lord to afford the chosen people a visible sign of his acceptance of their oblations and of the becoming services thus rendered, for the cloudy pillar descended from on high and rested on the tabernacle, while a more resplendent glory filled it, so that Moses himself was unable for a time to enter. The priests continued thenceforth to offer the daily and occasional sacrifices, as instructed by Moses in accordance with the divine commands.

We must now proceed to give a brief account of the sacrifices and oblations which formed so prominent a part of the system of ritual service under which the Israelites were placed. The regulations in these matters will always on that account obtain the serious attention of religious persons, and even of those who regard them as affording curious information and matter for inquiry respecting a state of things which has long passed away. These things strike us very differently from the ancient Gentiles, who, being themselves familiar with sacrifices and oblations, were only anxious in tracing the formal differences between their own usages and those of the Hebrews; and they were by no means surprised at many points which appear strange and unaccountable to us, to whom the whole subject is new, or rather, to whom it is old and passed away out of actual knowledge.

It will be convenient to consider this subject under the heads of 1, Sacrifices; 2, Offerings; 3, Libations.

1. *Sacrifices* imply the infliction of death upon a living creature, usually by the effusion of its blood, in the way of religious worship; and the presentation of this act to God as a supplication for the pardon of sin, and as a supposed means of compensation for the insult and injury offered by sin to his holy government. In all such sacrifices it was essential that the animals to be slaughtered should be of those called "clean," but it does not appear that all clean animals might be sacrificed without distinction. Fishes were not in any case brought to the altar; but all clean birds might be offered, although the dove was the most common offering of the class. Of quadrupeds, oxen, sheep, and goats were the only kinds brought to the altar: and wild animals of every kind were inadmissible. The utmost care was taken, in selecting the victims, to choose only such as were free from every blemish. The animal thus selected was led to the altar by the person offering the sacrifice, who laid his hand upon its head, on which he leaned with all his strength, and while the sacrifice was offering said some particular prayers; and if several persons united in offering the same victim, they all put their hands upon it in succession. He thus acknowledged the sacrifice to be his own, that he loaded it with his iniquities, that he offered it as an atonement for his sins, that he was worthy of death because he had sinned, having forfeited his life by violating the law of God; and that he implored God to

accept the life of this innocent animal in the place of his own. The serious reader will not need to be reminded how strikingly all this prefigures, and was doubtless designed to prefigure, the great atonement, which in the person of Jesus Christ "was once offered to bear the sins of many" (Heb. ix. 28).

When the victim was brought before the altar, the priest implored the divine favour and assistance by prayer, and poured a libation of wine upon its head. The animal was then slaughtered, which was effected by cutting the throat and windpipe entirely through at one stroke, the blood being caught in a vessel and sprinkled round about the altar; and that which remained after these aspersions, was poured out into a kind of trench at the foot of the altar. The victim being thus immolated, the skin was then stripped from the neck, the breast opened, the bowels taken out, and the backbone cleft, and the carcase was then divided into four quarters. Previous to laying this sacrifice upon the altar, it was salted; and, according to the nature of the offering, either the whole or part of the victim was consumed on the altar, where the fire was kept continually burning. The sacrifices thus offered by the altar-fire to God were of four kinds:—

1. *The Burnt-offerings*, or holocausts, which were voluntary offerings wholly devoted to God. The victim to be offered was, according to the person's ability, a bullock without blemish, or a male of the sheep or goats, or a turtle-dove or pigeon, which he himself was to bring before the Lord, where they were offered in the manner already described. If the party were too poor to bring any of these offerings, he might bring "a meat-offering," which will presently be described.

2. *The Peace-offerings* were also voluntary, in token of peace and reconciliation between God and man; they were either offered in thanksgiving for benefits received or for the impetration of mercies. These sacrifices consisted either of animals, or of bread or dough: if the former, part of them was to be consumed on the altar, and the remainder was to be eaten by the priest or by the party presenting the offering.

3. *The Sin-offerings* were offered for sins committed through ignorance, or wilfully against knowledge, and which were liable to punishment from God unless thus expiated. These offerings consisted in general of a sin-offering to God, and a burnt-offering in token of acceptance, accompanied with the restitution of all damage which the sin thus expiated had occasioned to others.

4. *The Trespass-offerings* were made when the party who made them had reason to doubt whether he had violated the law of God or not. They do not appear to have materially differed from the sin-offerings. In both these kinds of sacrifices the person who offered them placed his hands on the victim's head, and confessed his sin or his trespass over it, saying:—"I have sinned, I have done iniquity, I have trespassed, and have done thus and thus, and do return with repentance before thee, and with this make atonement." The animal was then considered as vicariously bearing the sins of the person who brought it.

All the sacrifices which have been mentioned were occasional, and had reference to individuals; but there were others which were national and stated, daily, weekly, monthly, and annual. The perpetual or daily sacrifice was a burnt-offering consisting of two lambs, which were offered every day, morning and evening, at the third and ninth hours. They were burnt as holocausts, but by a small fire, that they might continue burning the longer. With each of these was offered a bread-offering, and a drink-offering of strong wine. The morning sacrifice was intended to make atonement for the sins committed in the night, and the evening sacrifice for those committed during the day.

The weekly sacrifice, on every Sabbath-day, was the same as the daily sacrifice, and was offered in addition to it.

The monthly sacrifice, on every new moon, or at the beginning of each month, consisted of two young bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs of a year old, together with a kid for a sin-offering, and a suitable bread and drink-offering.

The yearly sacrifices were those offered on the great *annual* festivals, which will hereafter be particularly noticed.

II. The offerings not of blood, called "Meat-offerings," consisted of meal, bread, cakes, ears of corn, and parched grain, with oil and frankincense. The spirit of the law was that, as expressed by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Without shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22). Consequently these offerings could not be presented as sin-offerings, except in the single case of a person who had sinned being so poor that even the offering of two young pigeons or two turtle-doves exceeded his means. They were to be free from leaven or honey, but it was required that pure salt should be added to all of them.

III. *The Drink-offerings*, or *Libations*, were accompaniments of both the bloody and the bloodless offerings, and were never used apart from them. They consisted of wine, which appears to have been partly poured upon the brow of the victim, in order to consecrate it, and partly allotted to the priests, who drank it with their portions of both kinds of offerings.

Besides the various kinds of sacrifices which have been described, there were likewise certain oblations made by the people, consisting of wine, bread, oil, and incense. These were divided into three sorts—the Ordinary, the Voluntary, and the Prescribed.

1. The *Ordinary* oblations were of a certain kind of perfume called *thumiama*, which was burnt every day upon the altar of incense; and also of the shew-bread, which was offered new every Sabbath-day, when the old was taken away and eaten by the priests.

2. The *Voluntary* or Free-will oblations were offerings made in consequence of certain promises or vows. The former did not so strictly bind as the latter, of which there were two kinds, namely, the vow of consecration, when anything was devoted either for a sacrifice or for the use of the tabernacle, as wine, wood, salt, and the like; and the vow of engagement, when a person undertook to do something which was not in itself unlawful, as not to eat of some particular meat, nor to wear some particular garment, nor to cut his hair, and other acts of self-denial.

3. The *Prescribed* oblations were the First-fruits and the Tithes The First-fruits of all animal and vegetable products were consecrated to God. Among animals, the first-born males only belonged to them, and the people not only had the liberty, but were required to redeem them in the case of men and unclean animals, which could not be offered in sacrifice. This, as formerly mentioned, was in memory of the first-born of Israel having been preserved when those of the Egyptians were destroyed. The redemption for a first-born son was fixed at five shekels, or about twelve shillings. This redemption took place when the child was a month old; but the first-born of cattle were offered at eight days old, and, if fit for sacrifice, could not be redeemed with money. The blood and fat were offered to the Lord, but the carcasses belonged to the priests Asses, being deemed unfit for food, were redeemed with a lamb, or else slaughtered; and in general the firstlings of all unsuitable beasts were to be redeemed and the price given to the priests. And then, as to the vegetable products; these were of several kinds, which it is not necessary to describe in this place further than for the purpose of discrimination. The barley-harvest began the agricultural gatherings of the year, and this harvest could not be commenced until the first sheaf had been offered before the Lord; so, likewise, the produce of the harvest could not be used for bread until new loaves therefrom had first been offered to God on the day of Pentecost, by which time the wheat-harvest was usually over. It is not to be supposed that these offerings were made by every family. They were single representative acts, at the common charge, for the whole nation, in testimony of gratitude to the Lord and Giver of Life for the fruits of the field, and of acknowledgment that to him belonged the earth and the fulness thereof.

These two acts marked the beginning and ending of the harvest season. But the real first-fruits, in which the priests had a substantial interest, were the portions which in the act of gathering the owner set aside for the purpose of oblation. This was what the owners took with them, with much ceremony and rejoicing, when they went to celebrate the feast of Pentecost, forty days after the Passover. There was another offering of first-fruits, for later products, at the end of the agricultural year in autumn. This was called the first-fruits of the threshing-floor, and was not taken to the place of the tabernacle, or temple, but was delivered to the priests at the barn or the wine-press. The proportion of these offerings to the whole was not prescribed by the Law, and was probably intended to be voluntary; but an interpretation of later years founded upon Ezek. xiv. 13, fixed it at a sixtieth of the whole produce. No one was then bound to give more; but he who did not was considered sordid: one-fortieth was, however, accounted liberal, and the amount ranged between these numbers.

As the first-fruits formed an acknowledgment of God as the Lord of the Earth and the Giver of all good, so the Tithes, which were one-tenth of all the produce, formed an acknowledgment to him as King of Israel, and formed the rent or tenure by which his subjects held the land which he bestowed upon them, and of which he constantly claimed to be the sovereign proprietor. This tenth appears to have been a *jus regium* of ancient times, and is so mentioned by Samuel (1 Sam. viii. 15) in describing the regal customs of other nations, which the king whom the Israelites coveted would follow.



338.—Burnt-Offering of the Herd. (Melville.)—Lev. i.
Poeth-offrwm o'r Praidd.



339.—Meat-Offering. (Melville.)—Lev. ii.
Bwyd-offrwm.



340.—Peace-Offering. (Melville.)—Lev. iii.
Aberth Hedd.



341.—Sin-Offering of the Congregation. (Melville.)—Lev. iv.
Pech-aberth y Gynnulleidfa.



346.—Repentance. (Flaxman.)
Edifeirwch.



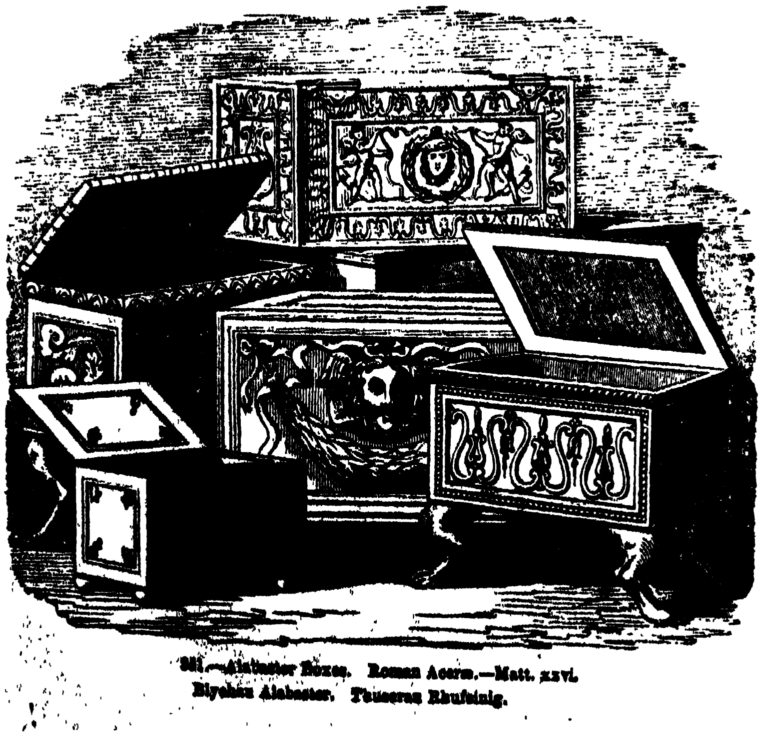
347.—Anointing the Feet of Jesus. (Sebastian Ricci.)—John xii.
Eneinio Traed yr Iesu.



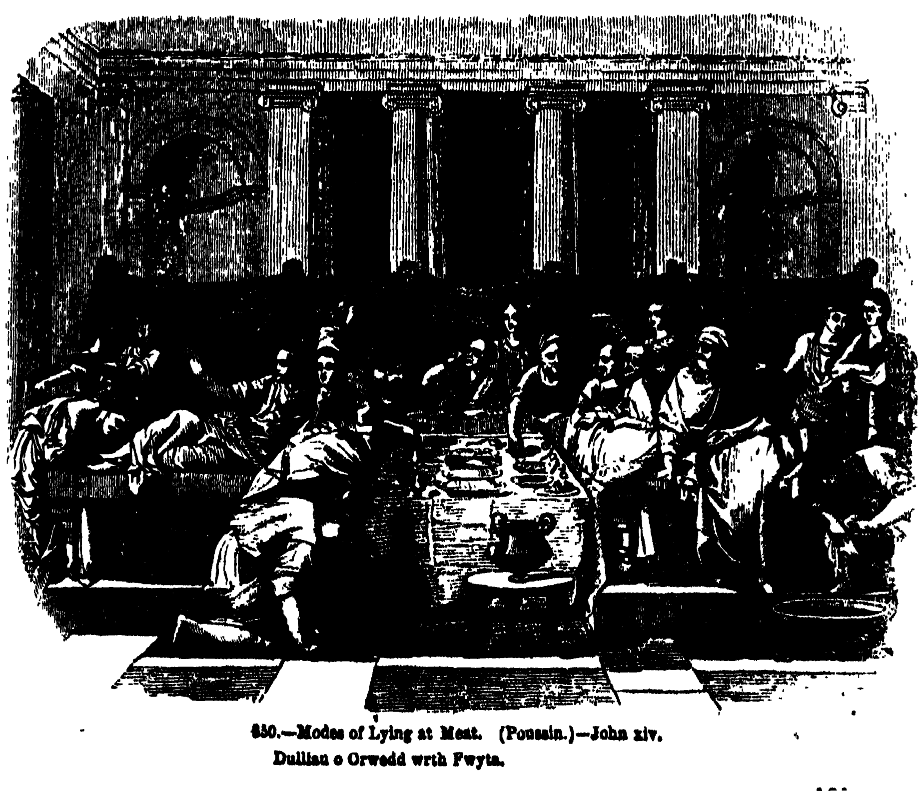
348.—Healing the Widow's Son.
Iachâu Mab y Wraig Weddw.



349.—Luke xi.



351.—Alabaster Boxes. Roman Acerra.—Matt. xxvi.
Blychau Alabaster. Thuserau Rhufeinig.



350.—Modes of Lying at Meat. (Poussin.)—John xiv.
Dulliau o Orwedd wrth Fwyta.

SUNDAY XIII.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

NOW it was not so with the people present. To heal the sick and to cast out unclean spirits were indeed acts of wonder to all who saw them; but to restore defunct nature, and snatch from the grave its prey, was a prodigy so great as filled the beholders not only with amazement, but fear. They glorified God for visiting his people by sending a great prophet among them; for although this act taken alone did not evince that Jesus was the very Christ, the greatness of the deed satisfied them of the divine power with which he was invested. They could not but see in Jesus one greater than even Elisha, inasmuch as without the use of prayer, or stretching himself upon the body, but by a simple order, he had in a manner utterly unexampled restored the dead to life.

This great miracle gave a new impulse to the general discussion respecting the prophet of Nazareth. It attracted the attention of John the Baptist in his prison, and decided him to require of Jesus an explicit declaration as to whether he was or was not the promised Messiah. We may ask how it was that John, who had already more than once declared his perfect satisfaction on this point, should now be in any doubt. The answer may be, that John's ideas in this matter may have become unsettled by Jesus not having manifested himself as the Messiah in the way which he expected, or advanced his claim under the conditions which he had supposed. He therefore sent two of his disciples to Christ to ask the question, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" Jesus, at the time the messengers came, was engaged in healing the diseased, casting out evil spirits, and restoring sight to the blind. Instead of returning a direct answer, he desired the disciples to tell their master the things they had seen performed:—"Go and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached." As these were the real characteristics of the Messiah's kingdom, according to the prophets, this explicit reference to them *as evidence*, was calculated to satisfy John and his disciples that the great deeds of Christ were not to be regarded as the acts of a mere prophet, but as the required and appointed testimonials of "the Christ of God."

When John's disciples had departed, our Lord began to speak to those around him of John and his character and mission. He passed a high encomium upon the austerity and holiness of his person, the greatness of his function, and the divine character of his mission. He affirmed that John was greater than any preceding prophet, indeed, the greatest of men born of women; for besides his wonderful conception, and being himself the subject of ancient prophecies, he had seen and known the Messiah and had been his precursor. He was a burning and a shining light, the second Elias of the prophets—and yet, added Christ, with startling abruptness, "He that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he;" meaning, that, as belonging to the old system about to be done away, or at most occupying an intermediate place between the old and the new, any Christian teacher, instructed in the things pertaining to Christ's spiritual kingdom, had points of superiority even over John the Baptist. Jesus concluded with a striking illustration of the perversity of the nation, by reference to the reception which he and the Baptist equally met with, notwithstanding the difference in their course of conduct and procedure. The Baptist, who came neither eating nor drinking, that by this austere and mortified deportment he might gain the reverence of the people, could not obtain acceptance; neither could Jesus, who, on the contrary, came eating and drinking—that, by a moderate and affable life, framed after the common use and habits of men, he might make to himself a place in their sympathies and affections. The austerities of the one they ascribed to insanity; and the sociality of the other, to a conviviality of disposition unseemly in a teacher and a prophet. This gave him occasion more especially to reprehend the towns which had witnessed his greatest works, Capernaum, Chorazin, Bethsaida, in that their hardness and unbelief had remained unmoved. For this a doom harder than that of Sodom was declared to be in store for them; for even Sodom had sinned against less light than had been shed upon them. This implied the doctrine which Jesus took many other occasions to inculcate—that men were to be judged not so much with reference to the positive qualities of sin, as with regard to the degree of light and knowledge, or means of knowledge, against which sin is committed. He admitted, however, that the things he taught were harder to receive by the high and lofty than by the lowly and the poor and humble; and he thanked God that, although these things were hidden from the wise and mighty of the world, they were manifest even to babes.

Our Lord concluded his admirable discourse by calling upon his auditors to exchange the heavy burden of the Levitical Law for the ease, rest, and peace offered by the new revelation of the divine will, which he came to promulgate. This invitation, equally applicable to all the weary and heavy laden, from every cause, in every age, was couched in the emphatic and ever-memorable words—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

This discourse seems to have made considerable impression upon some even of the Pharisees who were present, and one of them, named Simon, invited him to dine at his house.

It must be understood that the Roman custom of reclining on couches at meal-time was at this period in common use among persons of the higher and middle classes in Judea. It is not, indeed, necessary to suppose that the Jews borrowed it from the Romans. It was a Babylonian and Persian custom, which found its way to the west of the Euphrates, and which the Hebrews probably acquired during their subjection to the kings of the East. Three benches were placed so as to form three sides of a hollow square which contained the table. The guests reclined upon the benches or couches, with their feet turned out behind and their faces towards the table, resting their bodies in a half-raised position upon cushions or upon the left arm. This explains several passages of the New Testament, especially those which describe Lazarus as lying in Abraham's bosom (Luke xvi. 23), and John as leaning on his Lord's bosom at the last supper (John xiii. 23): the person so described as lying in the bosom of another was of course the one who reclined next below that other, and whose head necessarily approached to the bosom of the one who lay above him. There was usually a good space between the walls of the guest-chamber and the back of the couches on which the guests reclined.

It was quite easy for any persons, at an entertainment such as that to which Simon invited Christ, to gain access to the public guest-chamber, and to remain unmolested so long as they did not interfere with the operations of the servants, which they were in little danger of doing while they remained in the side space between the walls and the back of the couches, seeing that the business of the servants was almost confined to the open side of the square which the triclinium formed.

While they were at meat, a woman of the place came and planted herself behind the place where Jesus reclined. She is described as one, "who had been a sinner," by which it is understood that she had led an impure life, and we see no reason to disturb this conclusion. We must only contend that this woman, described distinctively as "a sinner," is not to be confounded with Mary Magdalene, nor with Mary, the sister of Lazarus, of Bethany, of whom transactions nearly similar are recorded. Much confusion has arisen from regarding as one, three distinct persons and transactions.

This woman, as Jeremy Taylor finely expresses it, "came to Jesus into the Pharisee's house, not—as did the staring multitude—to glut their eyes with the sight of a miraculous and glorious person; nor—as did the centurion, or the Syro-Phœnician, or the ruler of the synagogue—for the cure of her sickness, or in behalf of her friend, or child, or servant; but—the only example of so coming—she came in remorse and regret for her sins, she came to Jesus to lay her burden at his feet, to present him with a broken heart, a weeping eye, and great affection." She came trembling, and wept bitterly for her sins at his feet. Simon had neglected to order his servants to wash the feet of Jesus, although this was an act of civility and attention then frequently observed in Palestine, although less so than it had been in more ancient times. Perceiving this, the weeping sinner let fall her tears upon them, and, having bathed them with that tribute of her grief, wiped them with the hair of her head. This in itself might have been misunderstood, but as a preparation for the act which followed, it becomes very intelligible. She came to anoint his feet with costly ointment. It was necessary they should first be washed, and finding that this had been neglected by the host, her fast-flowing tears suggested the means to which she resorted.

Having thus bathed his feet, the woman drew forth the vessel of precious nard, and breaking off the stopple, the place was filled with the rich odour of the perfume she cast upon her Saviour's feet.

This anointing of the feet was by no means a common act, and

the anointing them with this kind of ointment was accounted a luxurious extravagance even in kings. It must have been worth nine or ten pounds of our money, or probably more in comparative value, when the great difference in the general cost of commodities is considered.

The fragrance of the ointment drew the general attention of the guests to this act of the woman. They formed their different opinions upon it, and narrowly watched the effect which it would have upon Jesus himself, and the manner in which it would be noticed by him. The thought which arose in the mind of the host himself was eminently characteristic of the Pharisee. We are told that "he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner." It was this unuttered thought of the Pharisee which our Lord saw fit to mark out for his most pointed notice. "Simon," he said, "there was a certain creditor who had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most?" Simon could not but answer, "I suppose the one to whom he forgave most." Jesus answered—"Thou hast rightly judged;" and then turning towards the woman, he added—"Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house: THOU gavest me no *water* for my feet; but SHE hath washed my feet with *tears*, and wiped them with the hair of her head. THOU gavest me no kiss; but THIS WOMAN, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my *feet*. My *head* with *oil* THOU didst not anoint; but THIS WOMAN hath anointed my *feet* with *ointment*. Wherefore, I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." He then said more formally to the woman herself, those great words which man or woman never heard from mortal lips before: "Thy sins are forgiven." This created a deep sensation among those who heard it; for they knew it was not for man to forgive sins; and yet they were by no means prepared to recognise Jesus as more than man. While they were murmuring among themselves, "Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" Christ, again turning round to the woman, dismissed her with—"Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace!"

After this Jesus set forth upon another tour in Galilee, performing his usual works of mercy, and seizing all suitable occasions of pouring forth those persuasive utterances on which the people generally hung with admiration and delight, while those who were wise in their own conceits, the bigots of a system, found in all he said matter for cavil and reproach. In this excursion he was attended by the twelve apostles, and also by some women of property and consideration, who out of their abundance felt it their duty to provide food and such other necessaries as the party required. Among these women we find particular mention of Mary Magdalene, so called from Magdala, near Capernaum, her native place; she was probably a widow, and is not to be confounded with "the woman who was a sinner," who has just been under our notice. She owed a debt of deep gratitude to Christ, who on some former occasion had dispossessed her of "seven devils." Another of these ladies was the wife, or more probably widow, of Chuza, the steward of Herod Antipas; and another is only known by her name of Susanna. This incidental statement by St. Luke (viii. 3) is corroborated, also very incidentally, by St. Mark (xv. 41), who, speaking of the women who were present at our Lord's crucifixion, says that when Jesus was in Galilee, "they followed him and ministered unto him of their substance." We thus obtain information respecting the mode in which Jesus and his apostles were principally supported during those constant movements which precluded them from earning their own subsistence. Most of them had lived by their labour; and the few who may be supposed to have had some property, could not long have supported the expenses of so large a body, but through the assistance obtained from these and other pious women, who appear for the most part to have received from our Lord—in the cure of painful diseases—benefits which they estimated beyond all price.

The travelling of men and women in parties from all parts of the country to Jerusalem, at the great festivals, familiarized the mind to such associations in travel, and relieves all that seeming impropriety which the absence of any such circumstance in our own social habits might induce us to connect with them.

Jesus did nothing more in this town which is recorded; and at length Christ again returned to Capernaum. On his arrival, he went with his followers to the house which he commonly frequented, which was speedily so beset by people anxious to see and hear him, that the inmates were unable to take their usual meals. Heedless of this, Christ, although just arrived from a journey, and needing refreshment, went forth and spoke to the multitude; but when his friends within knew this, they declared that he was carried by his zeal away beyond himself; and they went forth and constrained him to come in and obtain that refreshment and rest which he was supposed much to need. (Mark iii. 19—21.)

The next recorded act of Christ, probably on the following day, was the relief of a poor creature who was brought to him, "possessed with a devil, deaf and dumb." At his word, the man's tongue was loosened, and his ears unstopped, and he who had long been mute to all the world, and all the many-voiced world mute to him, both spake and saw. A man in this plight is usually well-known in any place which he inhabits. This miracle, therefore, made a strong impression upon the people, and led them to throng after Jesus with fresh ardour wherever he appeared.

The Pharisees, and others of their mode of thinking, were much troubled at this; and seeing that they could not deny so plain a miracle, they proceeded to account for it after a peculiar fashion of their own. "This fellow," said they, "doth not cast out devils but through Beelzebub, the prince of devils;" that is, he expels the weaker demons by the aid of the stronger. Christ was not slow in exposing the absurdity of this reasoning. Citing a well-known proverb, he said:—"Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand;" and by way of applying this, he continued, "If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?" And then he added—"If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?" This question supposes, what indeed appears from other passages of Scripture, that besides Jesus and his apostles, several at this time went about pretending to cast out demons, both by exorcisms and medicaments (Luke xi. 19.; Acts xix. 13; compare Josephus, 'Antiquities,' vii. 6. 3; viii. 2. 5). It is probable that these exorcisms were sometimes effectual by means of the accompanying medicaments. This superstition continued for some time after the apostles, and even led in part to the use of exorcisms in the early Christian church.

After some further remarks, Christ uttered those awful words, which in all ages have engaged the profound attention of the Church—"All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh a word against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." This awful declaration has been variously understood: but taken in connection with what precedes and follows, and with the circumstances which called it forth, it seems to point to those who ascribed to the agency of devils the manifest and glorious works of God, such as those which were wrought by our divine Saviour. The crimes of the heart are greater than those of the hand; and surely, in the lowest depths of the most bitter heart there lurks not a sin equally horrid with that which Christ thus declares to be without forgiveness in this world or in the world to come.

This seems to have silenced that set of Pharisees. But soon after, Jesus was assailed by another set, who assumed the characters not of accusers, but of doubters. They came around him, saying, "Master, we would see a sign from thee." They meant a sign from heaven, such as some of those of Moses and Elias, and such as the Messiah might be expected to afford. The implied argument was, that the wonders he wrought on earth might be possibly effected by the power of Satan; but wonders from heaven would be above all such suspicion, and would bring conviction to their minds. But Christ knew that they asked not this from the desire to be convinced, or from the wish to obtain satisfactory proof of his divine mission, but in order to find new ground for cavil and objection. Some believed him to be an impostor, who could not give any such sign, and these hoped to confound him by the demand; others were prepared to cavil, even if such sign had been given—they would doubtless have disputed its reality, alleging that by some optical illusion things were made to seem to be which were not.

To this demand Christ replied by a keen rebuke of that rooted unbelief which was always demanding proof, and would not believe proof when it was given. He refused them a sign from heaven; he refused them any but a sign from earth—a marvellous sign, greater than any from heaven which they had demanded, and could only be understood by the light of after-days:—"An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given it but the sign of the prophet Jonas: for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."



354.—The Sign of Jonah. (West.)—Luke xi.
Arwydd Jona.



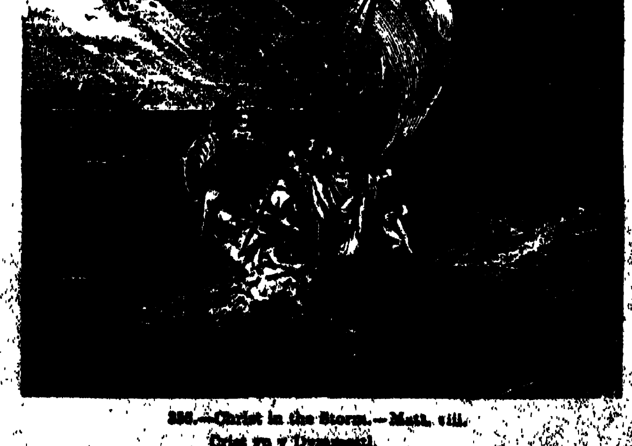
352.—Parable of the Sower.—Luke viii.
Dammeg yr Hauwr.



353. -Parable of the Tares.—Matt. xiii.
Dammeg yr Efrau.



355.—Christ in the Storm. (Rembrandt.)
Crist yn y Dymmestl.



356.—Christ in the Storm.—Matt. viii.
Crist yn y Dymmestl.



858.—Jeremiah among the Ruins of Jerusalem. (Bendemann.)—Lam. ii.
Jeremïah ym mysg Adfeilion Jerusalem.—Galar. ii.



857.—Jeremiah. (From the Frescoes, by Michael Angelo, in the Sistine Chapel.—Jer. i.
Jeremïah. (O Frescoes, gan Michael Angelo, yng Nghapel Sistin.)



859.—"My children are desolate." (Bendemann.)
"Fy mhlant sydd yn anrhaith."

SUNDAY XIV.—THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.



ILKIAH, the father of Jeremiah, is supposed by some to be the same who was high-priest in the reign of Josiah. This is uncertain: but we know that he was of sacerdotal extraction. He was a native of Anathoth, a town of the priests, about three miles to the north of Jerusalem, in the territory of Benjamin. He was called to the prophetic office nearly at the same time with Zephaniah, in the thirteenth year of king Josiah, 629 B.C., when he was of very early age He then diffidently sought to decline the appointment on the score of his youth, until, under the Divine encouragements, he obeyed, and continued to prophesy upwards of forty years, during several successive reigns of the degenerate descendants of Josiah, to whom he fearlessly revealed those marks of the Divine vengeance which their fluctuating and rebellious conduct drew on themselves and their country. As he had all along counselled submission to the power of the Chaldeans, he was favourably noticed by them after the destruction of Jerusalem, and he was suffered to remain, to bewail the miseries and desolation of Judah. He knew, however, that the exile and desolation had an appointed term, and he failed not to send consolatory assurances to that effect to his captive countrymen.

Eventually, Jeremiah was carried away, with his disciple Baruch, into Egypt, by Johanan, who, contrary to his advice and prophetic admonitions, resolved to remove thither, out of dread of the undistinguishing vengeance of the Chaldeans for the slaughter which Ishmael had perpetrated (Jer. xliii. 1—7). This concludes our authentic information respecting Jeremiah. According to the account preserved by St. Jerome, he was stoned to death at Tahpanhes, a royal city of Egypt, about 586 B.C., either by his own countrymen there settled, as is usually stated, or by the Egyptians, to both of which people he rendered himself obnoxious by the terrifying prophecies which he uttered. The Chronicle of Alexandria alleges that the prophet had incensed the Egyptians by foretelling that their idols should be destroyed by an earthquake at the time that the Saviour of men should be born and placed in a manger. This is of course a fiction; and, as Bishop Gray remarks (*Key to the Old Testament*, p. 368), his prophecies which are still extant respecting the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, must alone have been sufficient to excite the fears and hatred of those against whom they were uttered. There are, however, other accounts which relate that the prophet returned to his own country; and travellers are still shown a place in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, where, as they are told, Jeremiah composed his prophecies, and where a monument to his memory was erected by Constantine. There is, however, more reason to conclude that he ended his life in Egypt.

Many circumstances relating to Jeremiah are interspersed in his own writings. He lived in that most eventful period when the kingdom of Judah, torn asunder by intestine disorders, could only by the special protection of God—to which it had forfeited all claim—be prevented from falling a sacrifice in the collision of the two prevailing powers, Babylon and Egypt. His efforts to retard or prevent the ruin of his country, which he loved with the most exalted patriotism, were rewarded by his corrupt contemporaries with ingratitude, and even with a prison and attempts at murder. He himself touchingly complains of this treatment:—

> "Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me,
> A man of strife and contention with all the land!
> I have neither borrowed nor lent on usury,
> Yet every one doth curse me."—(xv. 10.)

Again:—

> "I knew not that they had devised devices against me,
> [Saying], Let us destroy the tree with its fruit,
> And let us cut him off from the land of the living,
> That his name may be no more remembered."—(xi. 19.)

Jeremiah, who repeatedly claims the authorship of these prophecies, seems to have usually employed Baruch in committing them to writing (xxxvi. 4; xlv. 1). He appears to have formed at different times collections of what he had delivered. The first seems to have been formed in the first year of Jehoiakim, when the prophet was expressly commanded by God to write upon a roll all the prophecies which he had uttered concerning Israel, Judah, and other nations; and this he did by means of Baruch. But this roll having been burnt by Jehoiakim, another was written under the prophet's direction, with many additional particulars (xxxvi. 32). In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the prophet seems to have collected into one book all the prophecies which he had delivered before the taking of Jerusalem (i. 3). To this he probably added such further revelations as he had occasionally received during the government of Gedaliah, and during the residence in Egypt, the account of which terminates with the fifty-first chapter. The fifty-second chapter is compiled from the five last chapters of the Second Book of Kings, and was probably not written by Jeremiah, as it not only contains in part a repetition of what the prophet had before in part related in the thirty-ninth and fortieth chapters, but some circumstances which it has been supposed did not happen till after his death.

"Jeremiah appears to have been pre-ordained," as Dr. Gray states, "as a prophet both to the Jews and Gentiles. He certainly delivered many prophecies relative to foreign nations. His name translated is, 'he shall exalt Jehovah,' and his whole life was spent in endeavouring to promote God's glory. His reputation was so considerable, that some of the fathers fancifully supposed that as his death is nowhere mentioned in Scripture, he was living in the time of Christ, whom, as the Gospel informs us, some supposed to have been this prophet (Matt. xvi. 14). They likewise apply to him and to Elias what St. John mysteriously speaks of—two witnesses that should prophesy 1260 days: which superstitious fictions serve, at least, to show the traditional reverence that was entertained for the memory of the prophet, who long afterwards continued to be venerated in the Romish Church as one of the greatest saints that had flourished under the old covenant; as having lived not only with the general strictness of a Prophet, but, as was believed, in a state of celibacy; and as having terminated his righteous ministry by martyrdom."

The literary character or style of Jeremiah's prophecies has been examined by different biblical scholars with much attention. By none has it been more carefully discriminated than by De Wette, who thus writes on the subject:—

"In Jeremiah's prophecies the spirit of his time and the condition of his people are faithfully reflected. His humour is sad, and melancholy, and depressed. His thoughts have no great elevation, and only attempt short, single flights. But he is by no means destitute of noble and expanded ideas; nor does he lack deep feeling. Of the last the following among other specimens may be quoted:—

> 'For the wound of the daughter of my people is my heart wounded;
> I mourn; amazement hath taken hold of me;
> Is there no balm in Gilead?
> Is there no physician there?
> Why then are not the wounds of my people healed?
> O that my head were waters,
> And mine eyes a fountain of tears,
> That I might weep day and night
> For the slain of the daughter of my people.'—(viii. 21.)

His style is without uniformity or consistency in regard to expression or rhythm. It is unequal; frequently energetic and concise, especially in the first twelve chapters; but more frequently it is tedious, running out into flatness. It is full of repetitions and of fixed thoughts and expressions. But it is not without certain charms of its own. Jerome says of him, 'As he is simple and easy in his language, so is he the most profound in the majesty of his thoughts. In language he seems more rustic than Isaiah or Hosea and some other prophets among the Hebrews, but in thought he is equal to them.' The style, with its alternations, now rising to rhythm, now sinking to prose, is attractive. It is like the flickering of a flame which finds not sufficient fuel. Sometimes whole passages are repeated; sometimes images, thoughts, and expressions." This writer adds, that the passages in the prophecies of Jeremiah which relate to foreign nations are distinguished by a more energetic tone, and by a more animated style, which has a tendency to rhythm. Of this peculiarity different explanations have been given. It is probably because most of these passages are composed of threatenings; for it has been remarked that the threatenings in the more domestic portions of his prophecies are distinguished by the same characteristic. His admonitions, on the other hand, are very little elevated above prose.

SUNDAY XIV.—BIBLE HISTORY.

IT is mentioned by Aristotle as an ancient law of Babylon that this proportion should be given to the kings; and Spencer shows, out of Aristophanes, that it was the custom of Athens, although a commonwealth, for a tenth to be paid to the magistracy. Now as the priests and Levites were properly the officers and ministers of state under God as King of Israel, the payment of the tenth to them through their hands was in agreement with the custom of most nations in paying one-tenth of their produce to the state. It is also to be observed that this tithe extended not only to the fruits and grain, but to cattle—the produce of the herd and of the flock. These tithes were received by the Levites in their several towns, and out of this they paid a tithe, or tenth, to the priests—which was a sufficiently liberal proportion, seeing that the priests were but one family of the whole Levitical tribe.

When this tithe had been paid, the husbandman drew forth from the remainder a second tithe, which he took, either in money or kind, to the place of the temple, and there made with it a feast, to which he invited, among others, the priests and Levites; but every third year he spent this tithe at home, "within his gates, upon the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow."

The various sacrifices and oblations which we have thus briefly described were attended with sundry ceremonial observances, which have been fully described in the book of Leviticus. At the first it became the duty of Moses to instruct the priests in their ministerial duties, and to enforce the observance of every ceremonial rite attending the services of the altar and tabernacle: and an awful lesson soon taught the priests and people the serious consequences of neglect or disobedience. Nothing, it would seem, could be clearer than the regulation that no fire was to be used in the sacred ministrations but that of the altar which had been kindled from heaven. This had been carefully explained beforehand, and it had also appeared that the offering of incense was one of the most honourable and distinctive functions of the sacerdotal office; and it was clearly stated that only one priest could at one time enter the tabernacle in discharge of this important and reverent ceremonial. Yet, at the first institution of these observances, no sooner did the time of incense arrive, while the people lay prostrate in adoration at the miraculous destruction of the sacrifices by a supernatural fire—than *two* of the sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, with unbecoming haste and emulation, hasted to the tabernacle to burn incense, their censers being filled with common fire—or with fire not taken from the altar. The singular circumstance that two should thus attempt to perform the duty of one, would suggest that there was a rivalry between them as to which should be the first to execute this sacred function in the holy place. But God knew how to vindicate his own honour, and how to exact becoming reverence from all who drew nigh to Him. No sooner did the feet of these rash young men enter the sanctuary, than a fire came forth from before the Lord and smote them dead, without in the slightest degree injuring their dress or their bodies. In this state they were taken forth and buried beyond the camp. This was a terrible stroke: but the bereaved father, mindful of his place and holy function, "held his peace," and allowed no sign of the grief or horror which rent his heart to escape from him. And henceforth it became a law that the priests were not on any occasion or for any loss to manifest the signs of grief or mourning in which other men indulged.

In order to perpetuate by organized institutions and periodical observances the great facts in his dealings with the race of Adam, and in particular with the race of Abraham, it pleased God to institute various festivals, which the chosen people were enjoined to observe. This is in accordance with, or in conformity to, the recognised quality, it may be infirmity, of our nature, which requires some tangible and frequently-recurring act of reminiscent celebration, to keep constantly present in a nation's mind the fact, in man's history or in God's doings, which it may be important to remember. Thus—to point to the only parallel illustration which our own practice offers—the great facts of the life and death of Christ, are, by authorized observances, brought in this country under the periodical notice of the *nation generally*, including multitudes of persons who otherwise would scarcely be aware of these facts, or of the still greater numbers who, knowing them as historical facts, would otherwise not give them a thought from the beginning to the end of the year, or would not be aware that a Christian community had an enduring interest in them.

On this principle were the great periodical festivals of the Jews established.

First of these was the Sabbath, which was designed to keep in constant remembrance that Jehovah, He who had made himself peculiarly known to the Hebrew people, was not to be regarded like the national and local gods of the heathen, but was in very deed the Creator of heaven and earth: the very same who in six days had formed their fair creation, and had "rested on the seventh day from all his works." The importance of this fact was so great, it lay so much at the root of the whole system, that it was made a matter of more frequent celebration than any other. It was celebrated every seventh day, which, to render the reference more distinct, was made a day of *rest* from all labour. The danger which this solemnity was intended to obviate was very imminent. In regarding Jehovah peculiarly as theirs, the Covenant God of their fathers, the Hebrews would be apt to forget that he was the great and universal Creator and Governor, who, for purposes then but dimly revealed, had stooped to become such to them: and in like manner, the strong reference of all their ritual observances to him as *their* national God and King would strengthen this impression, unless this tendency were counterbalanced by one pointing with equal force to his universal character. It was impossible for any Jew who duly observed the Sabbath to forget that his God was the Lord and Creator of the world. In an age when the tendency in all nations was to appropriate to themselves national and distinctive gods, who had no concern with other nations; and when they were inclined to consider, and actually did consider, Jehovah as the same to the Hebrews which their own gods were to themselves, the great importance of the Sabbatic institutions cannot be too highly estimated. It was, however, not without a more special reference to the *peculiar* condition of the Hebrews; for we are told that it was to them a type of that REST into which, in the fulness of time, Christ would introduce them.

The Jewish Sabbath, as is well known, was held on the seventh day, being our Saturday. It was a true festival, and not a fast; all the regulations which refer to it, however stringent, being designed to secure for man and beast on that day rest from all their labours. As the Jewish day was counted from sunset to sunset, and not, as with us, from midnight to midnight, the Sabbath began at sunset on the Friday evening, and ended with the sunset of Saturday. None but absolutely necessary labour was allowed on this day; nothing, in short, which might have been done on the preceding day, or could be done on the following day. Hence if an ox or ass fell into a pit, the labour of releasing it might be incurred even on the Sabbath-day; but the preparation of food was not allowed, seeing that for all essential uses it might as well be done on the day before, especially in a climate where warm meals were by no means so usual or so necessary as in our northern regions. For this reason, even the manna fell in double quantity on the day before the Sabbath, and none on that day, that the labour of collecting and preparing it might be intermitted.

Of the other festivals, three were denominated the great festivals, being the Passover, the Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles. These were distinguished from all other observances by the circumstance that, in the land to which the Hebrews were going, they were to be celebrated at the place which should there become the central seat of their religion by the presence of the altar, the ark, and the symbol of the Divine glory. This of course necessitated a journey by all the adult males three times in the year, from all parts of the country to that place, or, as we may say by anticipation, to Jerusalem. To encourage them in this, they were assured that their homes should, under the Divine protection, be secure from hostile invasion during their attendance at these festivals. This regulation, when it came into operation in Palestine, afforded the singular spectacle of a whole nation uniting at appointed seasons at one place, in the same acts of commemoration and religious observances. The design of these meetings was partly to unite the people, separated as they were into tribes with distinct territories, among themselves, and impress upon them their common origin, their common interests, and their common worship; teaching them to regard one another as brethren and fellow-citizens, and also to give greater solemnity to their worship by the concourse of so large a multitude. These excursions were high holidays for the people. They travelled in large parties from their several districts, and proceeded by easy journeys to their destination. They all occurred at the pleasant seasons of the year, when travelling was a pleasure, when food was naturally abundant, and when shelter at night was by no means necessary.



361.—Feast of Tabernacles. (Freeman.)—Lev. xxiii.
Gwyl y Pebyll.



362.—Proclamation of the Jubilee. (N. Poussin.)—Lev. xxv.



360.—Moses con-secrating Aaron. (Hoet.)—Lev. viii.
Moses yn cysegru Aaron.



363.—Well of Siloam. (Forbin.)
Ffynnon Siloam.



364.—The Princes' Offering. (T. Landseer.)—Num. vii.
Offrwm y Tywysogion



365.—Consecration of a Levite. (Melville.)—Num. viii.
Cyssegru Lefiad.



366.—First Day's Offering at the Feast of Trumpets. (T. Landseer.)—Num. xxix.
Offrwm y Dydd Cyntaf o Wyl y Pebyll.



367.—Wild Goat (Ibex.)—Deut. xiv.
Gafr Wyllt (Alpafr).

The *Passover*, which took place about the vernal equinox, has already been sufficiently noticed in this work.

The *Pentecost* has that name from a Greek word signifying *fiftieth*, because it was held on the fiftieth day after the Passover. In the Old Testament it is called the Feast of Weeks, because it was celebrated seven weeks, or a week of weeks, after the Passover. Our Whitsuntide answers to it, as does our Easter to the Passover.

This was a festival of thanksgiving for the abundance of the completed harvest; and it was on this occasion that the first-fruits were carried up to Jerusalem. But it was not merely an agricultural festival; it also was designed to commemorate the giving of the Law upon Mount Sinai, whereby it was made to bear the same special reference as the other festivals to the peculiar circumstances of the nation.

The *Feast of Tabernacles*, or of *Tents*, took place in the autumn about the time of the autumnal equinox, at the conclusion of the vintage, which formed the last principal labour of the agricultural year. For this reason it was also called the Feast of Ingathering. But its principal object, and that from which its usual name was taken, was to celebrate the dwelling of the Israelites in tents while they wandered in the desert. None of the festivals was celebrated with greater rejoicing than this. The most remarkable observances were, that during the week which this feast lasted, all the people lived in tents or green booths, which while resident in Canaan they usually erected upon the flat roofs of their houses (Nehem. viii. 16). During this festival the people also went about bearing in their hands citrons, and branches of palm-trees, myrtles, and willows, with which they at times walked in procession round the altar. Eventually a remarkable practice came to be connected with this festival, which had no foundation in the law of Moses. It consisted in pouring out upon the altar a libation of water drawn from the well of Siloam. After the water had been fetched from the pool, part was drunk with loud acclamations of joy and thanksgiving, and the rest was carried to the altar, where it was poured out upon the evening sacrifice. This ceremony took place on the last day of the feast, and was attended with great festivity and rejoicings. To this the Prophet is supposed to refer when he says, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Isa. xii. 3). This curious observance has a peculiar interest to the Christian reader from the fact that it was actually passing before our Lord's eyes, when, "On the last day, that great day, of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink!" (John vii. 37.)

To these three great annual festivals two others were added; and they were celebrated with great solemnity, although the presence at them of every adult male in Israel was not required. These were, the Feast of Trumpets, and the Great Day of Atonement—the latter being, however, not a festival, but a very solemn fast.

The *Feast of Trumpets* was held on the first and second days of the month Tisri, which was the commencement of the civil year of the Hebrews. This was, therefore, in fact, the New Year festival, and the trumpets answered to the bells with which it is our wont to announce the same event. Nor is this comparison fanciful; for there were many other occasions in which trumpets were among the Hebrews employed for the same purposes for which bells are used among ourselves. The trumpets were on this day blown in the tabernacle with more than usual solemnity, the people abstained from all labour, and particular sacrifices were offered.

The *Great Day of Atonement*, or *Feast of Expiation*, was observed as a day of strict fasting and solemn humiliation. It was in fact the only fast prescribed by the Law, which had so many festivals. It was held on the tenth day of the month Tisri; and the sacrifices and other solemnities of the day were more important and peculiar than any in the Jewish ritual. On this day alone was the high-priest allowed to enter the inner sanctuary, and then, divested of his magnificent pontifical raiment, and with purifying preparations no one of which might be omitted on pain of death. He first presented a young bullock before the Lord as a sin-offering for himself, the priests, and the Levites, together with a ram for a burnt-offering. Then two goats were appointed, one of which was to be a sin-offering for the people, and the other to be sent away as a scape-goat into the wilderness. The bullock was then sacrificed, and the high-priest, bearing in one hand a vessel containing some of its blood, and in the other a censer with incense, went into the Most Holy Place, and sprinkled the blood with his finger upon the cover of the ark. By this act he symbolically purified himself and those for whom he appeared from the sins and transgressions of the preceding year.

He then returned, and one of the goats, chosen by lot, was slaughtered, and its blood taken into the sanctuary, and sprinkled in the same manner as an act of atonement for the people. The high priest then took the live goat, and laying his hands upon its head, confessed over it the sins of all the people, laying them as it were on the head of the goat, which was then sent away by a fit person into the wilderness, where it was purposely set loose and lost. The meaning of this symbolical action seems very evident, although it involves some difficulties which need not in this place be discussed.

This having been done, the high-priest bathed himself in water, and resumed his official dress, and concluded the high solemnities of this great day by offering burnt-offerings for himself and for the people at the evening sacrifice.

It is not our intention to notice, except historically, the festivals of more modern institution; our present attention being confined to those prescribed by the law of Moses. Most of these have now been noticed; and it only remains to describe the one monthly feast, and those extraordinary festivals which were only celebrated after the recurrence of a certain number of years.

The only monthly feast was that of the *New Moon*; and this was not formally described as a feast, but was directed to be marked by particular observances, designed probably for the purpose of marking more distinctly the beginnings and endings of the months, which were lunar among the Hebrews; and the due computation of which was of importance for the regular observance of the other festivals. The ceremonies of the new moon festival consisted in the offering of additional sacrifices, and in the proclamation of the new moon by the sound of trumpets.

The Jews themselves were very sensible of the real object of this celebration, and were remarkably solicitous in marking the real time of the new moon's appearance. Their writers speak of calculations and calendars, formed for the purpose of marking the first time of the moon's phases; the little reliance which was placed upon them, in comparison with material evidence, is shown by the fact that the new moon was never proclaimed until two credible witnesses testified that they had actually seen the new moon. The measures that were in the later times of the Jewish history taken for this purpose are minutely described by the Rabbinical writers. Those who had seen the new moon upon the hills or in the open country, hastened to the city and made known the fact to the council. Thus the circumstance was usually announced by several independent couples of witnesses, who in return for the trouble they had taken were liberally entertained at the public expense. To the town and immediate environs the fact was announced by the blowing of the priestly trumpets; and to the country by a signal-fire upon the summit of Mount Olivet, which being caught up and repeated from hill to hill, speedily conveyed the fact of the *authorized* commencement of the festival to the most distant parts of the land.

We have next to notice the *Sabbatical Year*, which was designed as "a rest for the land;" a year in which the land lay fallow, and which for the soil corresponded to the seventh day which the law had provided for man and beast. The object of this institution seems to have been to prevent the exhaustion of the soil under a system of agriculture which knew little of manures, and had but an imperfect notion of the advantages which might be realized by a regulated rotation of crops. During this year the spontaneous produce of the soil was dedicated to charitable uses, and was left to be enjoyed by the servants of the family, by the poor, by the wayfaring stranger, and by the cattle. But how was want from scarcity during this and ensuing years to be averted? That was cared for by the special providence of God, who promised to give in every sixth year a triple produce, to serve the inhabitants until the fruits or harvest sown in the eighth year were ripe It will by this be discerned that the regulation made a strong claim upon the faith of the Hebrews; and they were far from meeting its requirements, for we learn in the sequel of their history, that they generally chose rather to place their trust upon the ordinary provisions which man makes for his household, than to rely upon the special covenants of God. And yet, let it be considered that the triple produce of the sixth year was received *before* the obligations of the seventh year accrued; and, therefore, the neglect of the resulting obligation was not a matter of worldly prudence, or of distrust; but a breach of the conditions on which the superabundance had been given. It was a greediness of gain, which, under the circumstances, must have been hateful in the sight of God, and which is in fact mentioned as one of the great public sins which were punished by the seventy years of captivity in Babylon. The slightest mention of this law suffices to indicate its very extraordinary character, taking together the injunction itself and the compensatory redundance of the sixth year.

SUNDAY XIV.—LIFE OF CHRIST.



THIS was an allusion to the sign hereafter to be given by his resurrection from the grave, which would be sufficient to convince and satisfy all who were not wilfully and desperately blind.

Our Lord then proceeded in an eloquent and impressive discourse to illustrate by comparisons, and to denounce for condemnation, the unbelief of the generation to which he had appeared. He no sooner concluded, than a woman in the company cried out:—"Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked!" And she—the very woman thus declared to be blessed above all others—she must have heard these words, for at that very time she stood without, accompanied by some of his relations, but unable to approach him for the crowd. She heard the words, and she heard the answer—"Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." Not, as Jeremy Taylor remarks, "not denying her to be highly blessed who had received the honour of being the mother of the Messias, but advancing the dignities of spiritual excellencies far above the greatest temporal honour in the world." Christ, when informed that his mother and brethren were without, desirous of getting access to him, still spoke in the same strain, for turning round to his disciples, he said—"Behold my mother and my brethren; for whosoever doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother."

The occasion of this visit from the mother and near relatives of Christ is not very clearly indicated. But it may seem that at Nazareth, from which he had now been a good while absent, they had heard so much of his proceedings, and of the bad feeling which in various high quarters he had excited, that they had come over to Capernaum, to see for themselves how matters stood, and possibly to dissuade him from a course of life likely to bring him into danger. Whatever was their object, the maternal affection of Mary, and her natural desire to see her son, will furnish a sufficient reason for her accompanying them, without supposing that she in any way distrusted the proceedings of her glorious son, of whose divine origin and illustrious destinies such convincing evidence had in former days been given to her.

The discourse of Jesus on this occasion engaged a Pharisee to invite him to a dinner, at which a considerable number of other Pharisees and Teachers of the Law were present. As all the Orientals feed themselves with their fingers, they are very careful to wash their hands before they eat, and the Jews did so. But, besides this, which was necessary to cleanliness, and which of course our Lord and his disciples never omitted, the Pharisees, and all those who made high professions of religious purity, washed themselves with particular scrupulosity, and after a peculiar manner: and any one who did not this, they regarded quite as unclean as if he had not washed at all. But Christ paid no attention to this, which excited the surprise and secret reprehension of the self-satisfied Pharisees there present. This gave our Lord occasion to speak in strong language of the outward show of superior holiness which these people affected, while their hearts were full of all abomination and uncleanness. The home-thrust thus made at their consciences had the effect which in their case might be expected. They were in the highest degree enraged, and they "began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak many things:" and this they did in the hope that in his wrath some words might fall from him which would give them matter for accusation against him, either before the Roman government or the Jewish council. But the prudence of Christ frustrated their malice, in the midst of all the plainness of his uncompromising reproofs.

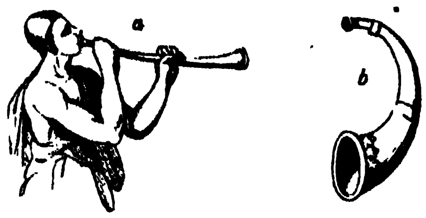
While Jesus was thus engaged in the house of the Pharisee, a great crowd of people assembled outside, who trod one upon another in their eagerness to be in the way of seeing and hearing him on his coming forth. When he did come out, he began first in that large audience to caution his own disciples against those principles of action by which the character of the Pharisees was deformed; and instead of hypocritical appearances and pretences, to maintain a conscience void of offence, at whatever cost.

While he spoke, one of the crowd implored him to use the authority which belonged to his character, to induce his brother to give to him that portion of the inheritance which, since the death of their father, he had injuriously withheld. It was not unusual among the Jews for men to submit their differences for arbitration to persons venerated for their religious character, but who had no legal power of enforcing their own decrees. The inconveniences of judicial appeal were thus avoided, and, from the confidence entertained in their impartiality and wisdom, their awards were more cordially obeyed than even those of the authorized magistrates. In the present case the man might also have expected that Jesus, as the Messiah, would act in the character of a prince, and so decide controversies relating to property. But Christ always resisted this notion; and he answered, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" Which was as much as to say, "My kingdom is of a spiritual nature, and I meddle not with the civil rights and properties of men."

It is probable that the other brother was present, and that there was too eager a desire in both to obtain the largest possible portion of the property in dispute. These suppositions are suggested by the fact that Jesus, who was always ready to give to his discourses whatever point they might derive from instant circumstances, proceeded to warn the assembled people against avarice and worldly-mindedness, and to direct their wishes to divine attainments and heavenly felicities. In the course of which he put forth the significant parable of the prosperous man whose mind was fully occupied in planning larger barns wherein to store the increasing produce of his fields, when he was arrested by the awful intimation—"Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"

Most of those whom he addressed were, however, in such humble circumstances of life, as to be in less danger from setting their hearts upon earthly treasures, than from the cares of the passing day and overmuch solicitude about the necessary supplies of life. Against this also he therefore proceeded to caution them, and encouraged them to ease of mind in all these respects, by the consideration that divine Providence would not fail to make adequate provision for the real wants of all those who made the kingdom of God and his righteousness the *first* objects of their solicitude. This he enforced, as usual, by lively illustrations drawn from actual circumstances. Observing a flight of "ravens," or rather "crows," he said, "Consider the ravens; for they neither sow nor reap, neither have storehouse nor barn: and God feedeth them. How much more are ye better than the fowls?" There is the more force in this, when we bear in mind how specially observable, in the opinion of the ancients, was the good providence of God with respect to this kind of bird. Several of them remark that young crows are driven away from the nest as soon as they are able to fly, and are afterwards supported, we scarce know how, by a remarkable providence of God. Philo, a learned Jew of those times, also remarks that many are naturally forgetful, and often fail to return to their nests: yet, by the wise and merciful providence of God, they instinctively heap together in their nests whatever may breed worms, by which their abandoned young are nourished and preserved. Some of these notions concerning crows are now known to be incorrect; and we mention them merely to show the emphasis which their existence in the popular mind must have afforded to the beautiful allusion which our Lord makes to these birds.

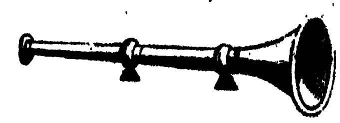
Again, lilies are abundant in Palestine—and at the time of our Saviour's discourse they were probably in bloom. Referring to these, Jesus said, pursuing his illustration, "Consider the lilies of the field,"—not of the garden, cultivated with care,—"how they grow. They toil not,"—as men in their laborious employments, "neither do they spin"—like women in their more sedentary occupations; "and yet I say unto you, that Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these." And then came the forcible application: "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith!" This will be the better understood when it is remarked that, after the moisture of spring has been absorbed, all wild herbage and decayed plants become rapidly dry in Palestine under the fervent heat of summer, and are, with all other decayed and dried vegetable products, collected for fuel. There was, and is, much scarcity of fuel in Palestine; but, except in the depth of winter, there was little need of it but for cooking and baking bread. This is the reason that fuel is usually described as being "cast into the oven." And this phrase may be better understood if we remember that the oven was usually a pit in the floor, the fire in which served both for fuel and, in winter, for warmth. These dry stalks and twigs were particularly suitable for the baking of bread, and were therefore preferred for the oven when bread was to be baked.



368.—Ancient Cornets.—*a*, from Herculaneum; *b*, from Calmet.
Cyrn Hynafol.—*a*, o Herculaneum; *b*, o Calmet.



369.—*a*, Trumpet or Funeral Pipe, from an ancient Tomb at Troy; *b*, Smaller, of the same kind, from Herculaneum.
a, Yr Udgorn neu'r Bibell Angladdol, o Feddrod hynafol yn Troy; *b*, Math llai, o'r un rhyw, o Herculaneum.



370.—Ancient Trumpet, from Calmet.—Psalm xcviii.
Hen Udgorn, o Calmet.



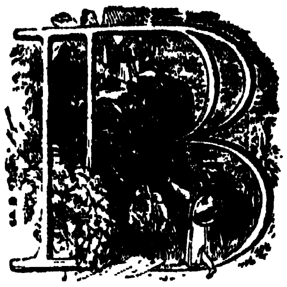
371.—Trumpets sounding an Alarm. (Melville.)—Num. x.
Udgyrn yn seinio Larwm.



372.—Ox's Horn Blower.—Joshua vi.
Chwythu Corn Ych.



373.—Ram's Horn Blower.—Joshua vi.
Chwythwr Corn Hwrdd.



375.—Psalm lvii.



379.—Psalm lxi.





371.—Psalm lvi.

E merciful unto me, O God, for man goeth about to devour me; he is daily fighting, and troubling me.—1.

Psalm lvii.

They have laid a net for my feet, and pressed down my soul: they have digged a pit before me, and are fallen into the midst of it themselves.—7.



383.—Psalm lxv.



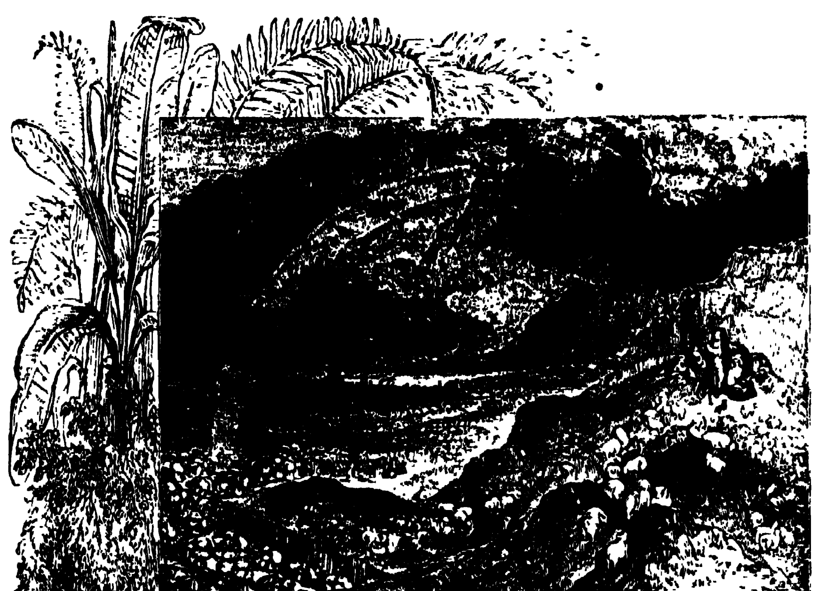
377.—Psalm lix.



381.—Psalm lxiii.



376.—Psalm lviii.





380.—Psalm lxii.

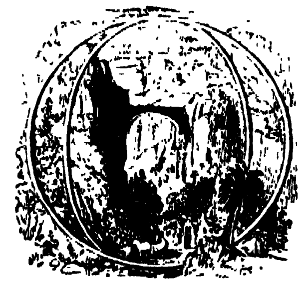
Y soul truly waiteth still upon God: for of him cometh my salvation.—1.

Psalm lxv.

The fold shall be full of sheep: the valleys also shall stand so thick with corn, that they shall laugh and sing.—13.



382.—Psalm lxiv.



378.—Psalm lx.



384.—Psalm lxvi.



385.—Psalm lxvii.

SUNDAY XV.—THE PSALMS.

WIND INSTRUMENTS.

THE other wind instruments of the Hebrews were horns, trumpets, and pipes.

The *horns* were the horns of animals, and have, in most cases, retained the name when they came to be made of metals, in the shape, more or less, of the original instruments. This is undoubtedly the most ancient instrument of the trumpet kind in the world. The facility of the invention, or rather the discovery, and the extreme simplicity of the instrument, have occasioned the natural horn of different animals to be in use among all nations; and its extreme antiquity is evinced by figures in the most ancient existing monuments, whether Egyptian, Greek, or Roman.

There is no doubt that the Hebrew word *keren* denotes a *horn* as an instrument of music; and it seems probable that another Hebrew word, *sophar*, denotes also a horn. We may conceive that at first the former word denoted the natural, and the other the artificial horn; and that when the natural horn went out of use, the former word denoted the instrument which was the most bent into a resemblance of the natural horn, and the other the one which was less bent and had less of that resemblance. It is of some importance to take notice of this, seeing that the word *sophar* is always translated by "trumpet" in our version, which is likely to mislead those who do not know that the word usually denoting a "trumpet," and so translated, is different from this in the original language.

There is a curious controversy whether the original "horns" of the Hebrews were the horns of rams or of neat cattle; but the general decision seems to be in favour of a kind of ram's horn, of which in the East there are various species and sizes. Against this conclusion, indeed, a great authority, Bochart, contends very warmly; and this he does on two grounds, first, that the ancient Greeks and Romans did not employ rams' horns for the purpose, but those of neat cattle; and, second, that rams' horns are not hollow. In answer to the first, Pfeiffer, a very learned German writer on the music of the Hebrews, remarks with great truth that no general inference can be drawn from it, adding, "Badly, indeed, would it fare with our Hebrew antiquities, if we should always seek for them at Rome or Athens." The testimony of Josephus that Gideon and his soldiers had rams' horns, if in this case no better, is at least as good as that of the Greek and Roman antiquities. On the second point, it is very amusing to see the learned array of authorities, *pro* and *con*, as to whether rams' horns are hollow or not; when the matter is one of fact, which almost every one might, with the least possible trouble, verify by his own observations. It would then appear that the horns of the kind of animals supposed to be comprehended under the general term of rams' horns, are more or less hollow through the lower part, and only become solid towards the point, and that the hollow of the lower part can be widened with little trouble, and can be extended through that portion of the smaller extremity which remains solid after the tip has been cut off.

The use of the instrument is clearly indicated in Scripture; but this is scarcely recognised by the English reader, as the word, being more usually *sophar* than *keren*, occurs as "trumpet" in the authorized version. It was usually employed in making announcements, as its strong sound would have confounded a choir of singers rather than elevated their music. Accordingly we find it at the giving of the law, where it was employed to call the people to hear that law proclaimed (Exod. xix. 13). When the covenant was again renewed, the people made known their joy amidst the blowing of horns or horn-like trumpets (Num. x. 10). They were also blown at every new moon, and every festival, even the burnt-offerings and thanks-offerings, as a memorial before God. At the Feast of "Trumpets" they were blown by the priests and Levites throughout the land. Of many other references to them, we must be content to notice the one in Matt. vi. 2—"When thou doest an alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee," &c. This is often understood metaphorically; but there is no need of doing this, for it is a fact that beggars in the East, especially dervishes and other religious beggars, do often solicit alms in connection with music. A little drum, or the rattling of some hard substance in a metal bowl, are often employed; but there is also a "beggar's horn," not unfrequently seen in the hands of dervishes. Something of this kind is in all likelihood the practice which our Saviour had in view.

Of the *Trumpets* (in Hebrew *chatzotzroth*), properly so called, our information is more distinct than of the horns. They are distinguished from the latter by being without any bend, and by being in all cases of metal. Among the Israelites their use was prescribed by a divine regulation, by which Moses was directed to make two trumpets of beaten silver for sacerdotal uses. There is little doubt that the original form of these trumpets was perpetuated in those in after-ages made for the temple service; and of these we happen to have authentic figures in the sculptures on the arch of Titus, which fully correspond with the Mosaical intimations, and also with the description of Josephus, who, as a priest, doubtless framed his account after those which were in his time actually in use. Moses, he says, "invented a species of trumpet of silver. Its length was little less than a cubit, and it was somewhat thicker than a flute. Its opening was oblong, so as to permit blowing in it with the mouth. At the lower end it had the form of a bell," &c. These accounts tally very closely with the figures of trumpets which we observe in the Egyptian monuments. It is about a foot and a half long, apparently of brass (being coloured yellow); and when sounded it was held with both hands, and either used singly or as part of the military band, with the drum and other instruments. It was straight, like the Roman tuba, or our common trumpet, and appears to have been particularly, although not exclusively, appropriated to martial uses.

Moses was commanded to make only two trumpets, because the priests for whose use they were intended were then only two. Afterwards far more of them were made. When, however, riches disappeared from Palestine, baser metal was employed in the manufacture of these trumpets (2 Kings xii. 13). They were employed in calling the congregation together, in sacrifices, and in battles.

It is agreed that *Pipes* or *Flutes* of some kind or other are denoted by the Hebrew word *chalil*. People employed these instruments in connection with others at the Feast of Tabernacles, and in general at every feast,—especially, however, while journeying up to Jerusalem to celebrate these feasts there. At least Isaiah (xxx. 29) refers to such a use:—"Ye shall have a song as in the night, when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, *as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord*." To accompany travelling with music and singing is common in the East even at the present day. We also find a general usage of this kind, for the sons of the prophets went forth to meet Saul with various kinds of music, and among others with pipes (1 Sam. x. 5). This instrument was also employed at the anointing of Solomon (1 Kings i. 40). For the most part it was consecrated to joy and pleasure; hence, in the time of Judas Maccabæus, the Israelites complained "that all joy had vanished from Jacob, and the pipe and the cithara were silent" (1 Macc. iii. 45). It was, however, employed also on serious occasions, as there was a distinct pipe of plaintive tone adapted to such occasions. Players on such instruments were present in the death-chamber of Jairus's daughter; and the attendance of pipers at funerals and lamentations is often mentioned by the Jewish writers. Josephus speaks of them, and says that many hired pipers (he uses the very word which is translated "minstrels" in Matt. ix. 23), led the way in the wailings. We learn also from the Rabbinical writers that even the poorest Israelite, when his wife died, had *two pipers* and one wailing woman to make lamentations; and the sick had more, according to their dignity or means of payment.

Much speculation respecting the form of the Hebrew pipes may be regarded as superseded by the discovery of those figured on the Egyptian monuments. These are of two kinds, single and double. The former is sometimes of extraordinary length, and the holes placed so low, that when playing the musician was obliged to extend his arms. It is of equal breadth throughout, not spreading out at the lower end like those in modern use. This pipe seems to have belonged principally, if not exclusively, to male performers, who held it with both their hands, and either stood, knelt, or sat upon the ground. The double pipe consisted of two pipes, which seem to have been occasionally united together by a common mouth-piece, and played each with the corresponding hand. It was not only used on solemn occasions, but very generally at festive banquets, both among the Egyptians and the Greeks. Men, but more frequently women, played upon it.

SUNDAY XV.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

TAKING such facts as these into account, we begin to perceive that the discourses of Christ often received a strong emphasis from surrounding circumstances, or from the sentiments and manners of the people, which does not readily or immediately occur to us under the great differences in our social condition, our climate, and our age.

From this, by an easy transition, our Lord proceeded to dwell upon the necessity of a state of constant preparedness for removal from this world and for the awful solemnities of the world to come. This, according to his wont, he illustrates by comparisons and parables, mostly drawn from the condition of servants awaiting the return of their master. The good servants wait with their loins girded for ready service, and, if it be night, with their lamps burning, their very uncertainty as to the exact time of their master's return making them to be the more anxious to be ready whenever he does come. But the bad servants, thinking their master never will come, because his coming is delayed, begin to eat, to drink, and to quarrel—when suddenly the master arrives, to their shame and confusion, and inflicts upon them the due punishment of their misdeeds (Luke xii. 35—48).

When Jesus had concluded his discourse, some of the persons present began to speak of a matter which excited much attention at that time. A demagogue named Judas of Gaulonitis went about asserting that God was the only sovereign of the Hebrew nation, and that consequently it was utterly unlawful to acknowledge any human sovereignty, much less to pay tribute and yield obedience to a heathen people like the Romans. He obtained many followers, chiefly in Galilee, who gave much trouble to the Roman government. Lately Pilate had circumvented and slain a body of these men, when they had gone to Jerusalem at one of the public feasts, so that, in effect, "their blood was mingled with (that of) their sacrifices."

Now the Jews firmly believed that grievous disorders or heavy calamities were sent by God in punishment for sin. Perceiving that the case was mentioned by those present with this feeling Jesus took occasion to give this notion his authoritative contradiction; affirming that those who heard him were equally sinners before God, and should also perish unless they repented. With the same view he also referred to an accident which formed the talk of the day—the fall of the tower of Siloam, in Jerusalem, whereby eighteen persons had been killed; asserting that these persons were not necessarily sinners above others for having been thus destroyed; although this was the undoubted persuasion of all his auditors. Mohammedanism, which borrowed much from the gospels, has produced a change of opinion in this respect in Western Asia, so that any one who now dies by such an accident as the fall of a tower, or of a wall, is regarded as a martyr.

The same day our Lord left the town, and went out by the sea-shore; and, being still attended by a great multitude of people, he went into a boat, and addressed them from thence. His discourse was still chiefly in parables. Speaking of this, Jeremy Taylor remarks: "He taught them by parables, under which were hid mysterious senses, which shined through their veil like a bright sun through an eye closed with a thin eye-lid."

It is very likely that most of them, being taken from the culture of the soil, were suggested by the agricultural operations then actually in progress before the eyes of the audience upon the sides of the surrounding hills.

The first was the significant parable of the sower, in which the different reception which the word of God finds in different hearts is compared to the different soils on which the seed, broad-cast by the sower, falls.

Then followed the parable of the tares sown maliciously among good corn. These the indiscreet zeal of the husbandmen would have rooted up as soon as they appeared; but were prevented by the sage discretion of the master, who feared that the tares could not be pulled up without damage to the young wheat; "Let both grow together unto the harvest," he said: "and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them into bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."

The three following parables, that of the insensible growth of corn, certain and timely, while man goes about the daily business of life and heeds not of it (Mark iv. 26—29); that of the smallest of seeds becoming a large tree, in whose branches the birds of the air find shelter (Matt. xiii. 31, 32); and that of the small piece of leaven which left in three measures of meal leavened the whole mass; all have seemingly the same reference to the gradual but sure spread of the gospel under the preaching of the Apostles; while, without doubt, there is in them a secondary reference to the rise and progress of divine grace in the soul of every subject of Christ's spiritual kingdom.

After this Jesus returned to the town; and when he was alone with his disciples, he expounded to them some of the parables which he had delivered to the people. To them he then added some other short parables designed yet further to illustrate the character and objects of the divine kingdom. First, he compared it to a treasure hid in a field, which when a man had discovered, he joyfully hastened to sell all he possessed to buy that field. This, like most of the other parables, had a foundation in local impressions which are not at once apparent to a Western reader. But in the East, where in times of trouble large amounts of property are concealed, the owners of which are slain, or go away and never return to reclaim what they hid, every one is more or less a treasure-seeker, and lives in the hope of being some day or other enriched by the discovery of hidden treasure. The same feeling was in this country the growth of the civil wars and troubles of former ages, till at length "treasure-finding" became a distinct branch of the occult sciences: and at this day there are perhaps not many villages in our rural districts which do not possess some tradition referring the enrichment of some principal family in the neighbourhood to the discovery of a crock of gold.

The next parable, of a merchant—that is a travelling dealer in jewels—seeking goodly pearls, and selling all that he had to buy one pearl of great price which he had found, describes a circumstance which at present occurs often to the highly intelligent and most respectable class of men who follow that vocation, and who not seldom spend the best years of their lives in travelling to and from distant lands in search of "goodly pearls" and other precious stones. There is perhaps not one of them who has not at times met with a jewel of such great beauty and high price, that he has been obliged to sell all his inferior jewels and every valuable article he possessed in order to obtain it.

The next parable compared the kingdom of heaven to "a net that was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind; and when it was full they drew to shore, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." This is of course done more or less by all fishermen, but it has perhaps not occurred to many readers that this selection was a nice and important matter among the Hebrews, who were forbidden to eat fish devoid of fins or scales, and among whom, therefore, the fish described as "bad" must have been more numerous than among other people.

Afterwards, Christ perceiving that the crowd of persons assembled in the neighbourhood began to increase very rapidly by arrivals from the surrounding districts, thought it expedient to pass over to the other side of the lake. But before he departed, he found occasion to deliver some emphatic and pointed answers to the declarations of two or three persons.

The first was one of the scribes, who being about to depart said, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." Jesus neither declined nor permitted this attendance, but said what probably was enough to deter a man in his condition—"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head"—meaning that he had no certain dwelling-place, no home, for any one who followed him: which may satisfy us that even in Capernaum, which seems to have been his most usual residence, he either occupied a hired residence or lived in the house of a disciple.

Another expressed the same intention, but said:—"Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father." It might certainly have been expected, in the first view, that Jesus, full of kind affections, would have complied with this, when even Elijah, severe as was his character, allowed Elisha to bid adieu to his parents (1 Kings xix. 20). But Jesus answered in a kind of *sententia paradoxa*, turning upon the metaphorical and physical meaning of the word "dead." "Let the dead" (the unconverted or spiritually dead) "bury their dead, but go thou and preach the gospel." Of two duties the lesser must yield to the greater; and the duty of following Christ and preaching his gospel was more urgent and quite as sacred as that which prevented the high priest among the Jews from approaching the dead of his house, or showing any signs of mourning for them.



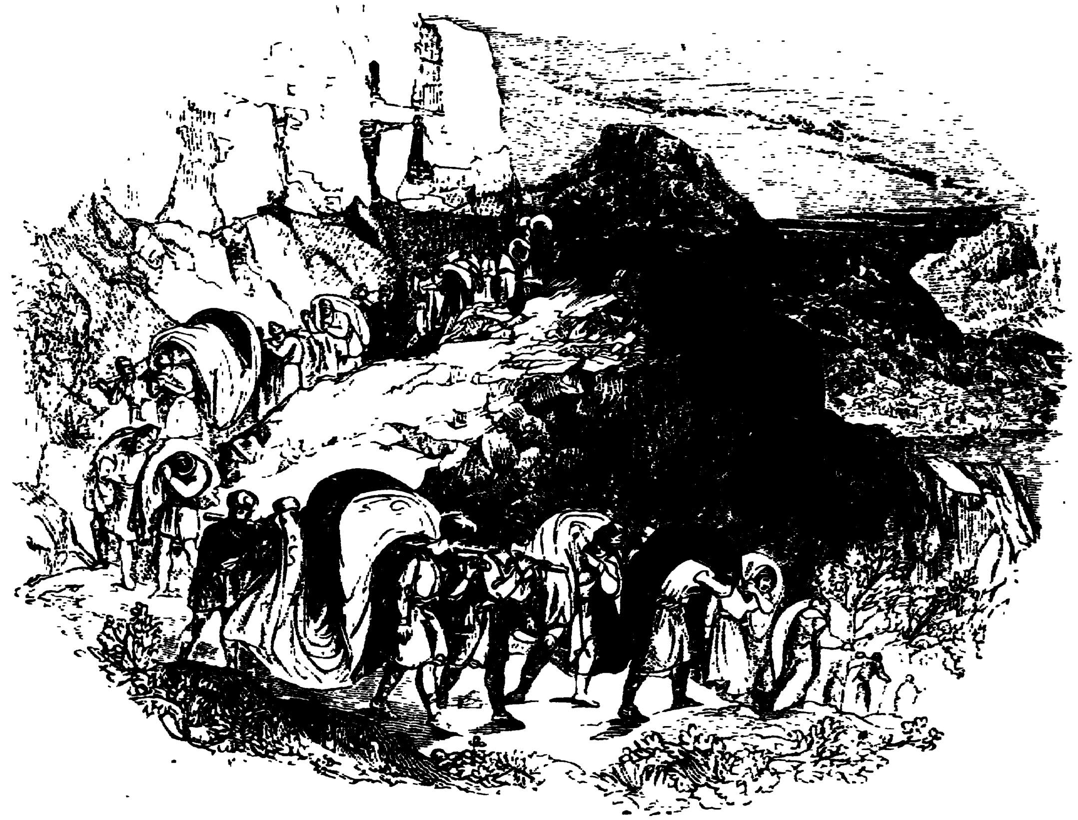
386.—Service of the Merarites. (Melville.)—Num. iii.
Gwasanaeth y Merariaid.



389.—Hewers of Wood.
Cymmynwyr Coed.



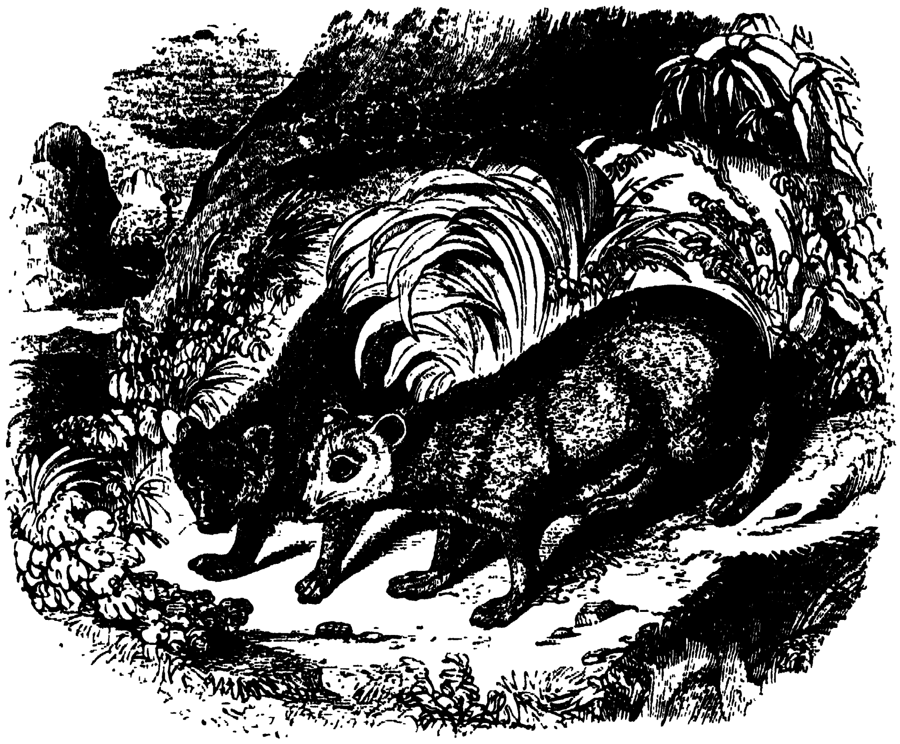
387.—Service of the Kohathites. (Melville.)—Num. iii.



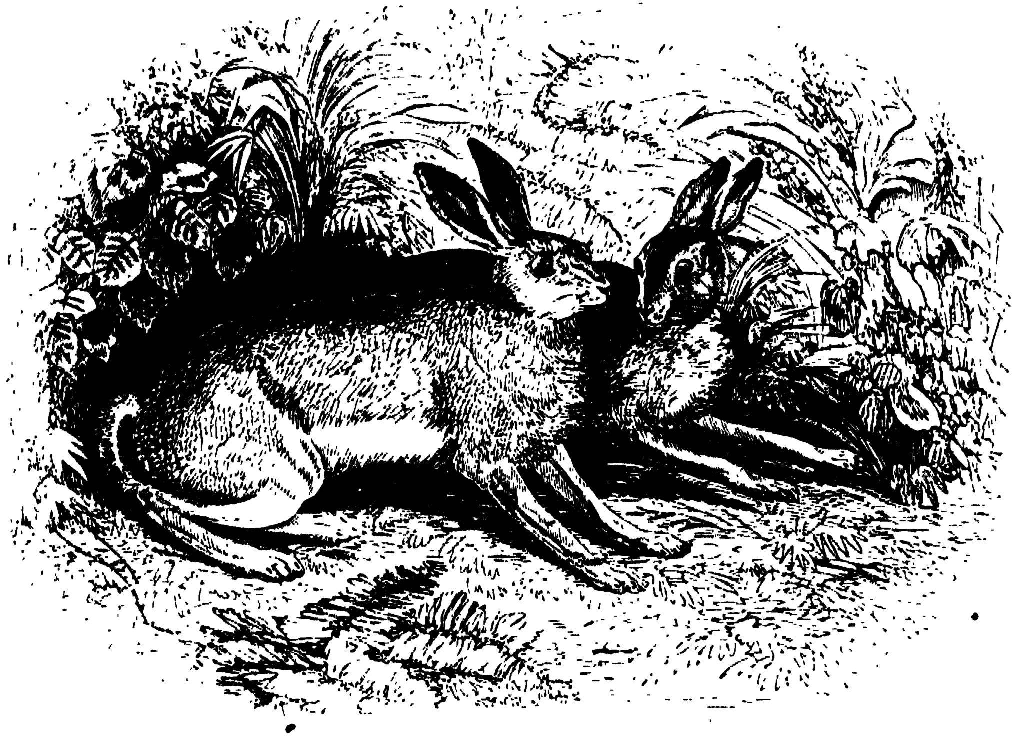
388.—Service of the Gershonites. (Melville.)—Num. iii.
Gwasanaeth y Gersoniaid.



390.—Jerboa, "Mouse."—Lev. xi.
Llygoden.



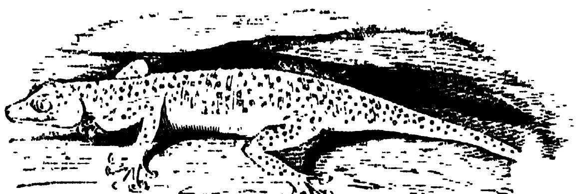
391.—Hyrax Syriacus. Coney.—Prov. xxx.
Cwningen.



392 Hare.—Lev. xi.
Ysgyfarnog.



393.—Arabian Gazelle.
Gafrewig Arabaidd



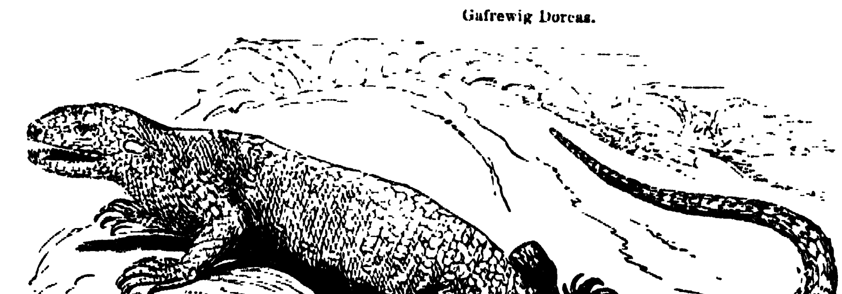
395.—Lacerta Gecko.—Lev. xi.
Lysard.



394.—Dorcas Gazelle.
Gafrewig Dorcas.



396.—Lacerta Stellio.—Lev. xi.
Ystelio.



397.—Lacerta Scincus.—Lev. xi.
Lysard.

SUNDAY XV.—BIBLE HISTORY.

IT is also to be observed, that in this year, that is, in every seventh year, all personal bondage of one Hebrew citizen to another ceased, and all debts became void. The former circumstance will be understood by reference to the fact, that a man who had fallen into a distressed condition might sell his services to another for a given time, or a creditor might attach the services of the debtor in payment of his debt. In either way he became a bondman; but as this power was liable to abuse, the bondage thus incurred could not last beyond the Sabbatical year. There is a curious trace of this in our seven years' term of apprenticeship; and the policy of civilized nations has led them to imitate, whether designedly or not, the other branch of this law, by statutes which, like our statute of limitations, forbid debts to be claimed after a given number of years.

A more solemn Sabbatical year was the *Jubilee*, which was held every seventh Sabbatical year, that is, at the end of every forty-nine years, or in the fiftieth current year. Besides the privileges common to other Sabbatical years, it had some peculiar to itself, which raised it to a high and honoured distinction. And as few could hope to see more than one of these celebrations in their lifetime, the people abandoned themselves the more entirely to the fulness of joy which the benefits of this great year were calculated to inspire.

The festival commenced on the tenth day of the month Tishri, in the evening of the Day of Atonement, when it was proclaimed by sound of trumpet throughout the whole land. At that blast, which blew but once in fifty years, thousands who lay in debt and bondage started up free men, and thousands of poor and forlorn men, who had long pined at seeing their heritage in the hands of strangers, became once more the lords of their ancestral patrimonies. The Jubilee not only relieved the seven years' bondman, but terminated the bondage even of those who had voluntarily declined the release of the Sabbatical year, and had suffered their ears to be bored in token of continued servitude in families to which they had become attached. Even these became free; for the trumpet proclaimed "liberty throughout all the land, to all the inhabitants thereof." But the grand distinction of this year was, as already intimated, that all estates which had been sold reverted to their original possessors. The first grants of land were designed to be perpetuated in the same families to all generations. But as to deprive the proprietors of everything like a right of sale might have been productive of much inconvenience, the power of selling their possessions for a term of years—not extending beyond the next year of Jubilee—was conceded. There is much in this law which well deserves our serious examination; and the more we examine it the better we shall be satisfied of its peculiar fitness for the people and the condition of life for which it was framed. In this view we are not to overlook two very important considerations—one is, that the Lord himself was the sovereign proprietor of the soil, the people occupying the station of tenants in fee to him—which is expressly assigned as a reason why it was put out of their power to alienate the land for ever. The other is, that this law was confined to the land, and not to buildings. Houses in a town might be sold in perpetuity, without being released in the Jubilee year.

In this survey our attention is necessarily limited to those parts of the Law of Moses which took the character of public institutions exhibited in material facts and stated observances. Some of these, however, could have only applied to their migratory state. Such were the services of the Merarites, the Kohathites, and the Gershonites in transporting the tabernacle, of which we have spoken in page 94, and probably also the hewers of wood were necessary auxiliaries to the camp appointments. There are many other parts of the law which it would be interesting to examine, did the necessity of proceeding with the historical narrative admit of the delay. Such in particular are the laws concerning Purifications, Vows, Nazariteship, Leprosy, Dress, and the distinction of Meats. On the last subject, which must have had a remarkable influence on the social relations of the people, we must allow ourselves to combine some remarks which have been offered in the 'Pictorial History of Palestine,' pp. 292—294, and the 'Pictorial Bible,' under Lev. xi. and Deut. xiv.

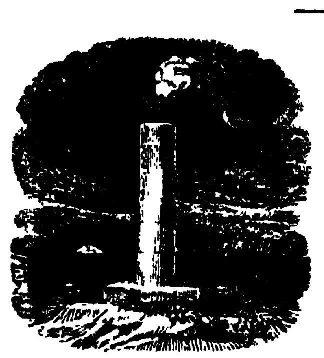
Distinctions of Food.—The code of Moses is remarkable, above all others of early date, for the attention which it pays to the preservation of the public health. This has been already noticed with respect to the regulations concerning leprosy. The same appears in many other matters, and may be particularly instanced with respect to the distinctions of food as "clean" or "unclean," that is, "fit" or "unfit" to be the food of man. But while the exclusive use of wholesome kinds of food was secured to the people by the law, which declared all which was in any degree unwholesome to be ceremonially *unclean*; the distinction also operated powerfully in one of the great leading objects of the Mosaical institutions, that of keeping them apart as a peculiar people. In fact, as Tappan well observes—"This statute, above all others, established not only a political and sacred, but a physical, separation of the Jews from other people. It made it next to impossible for the one to mix with the other, either in meals or in marriage, or in any familiar connection. Their opposite customs in the article of diet not only precluded a friendly and comfortable intimacy, but generated mutual contempt and abhorrence. The Jew religiously abhorred the society, manners, and institutions of the Gentiles, because they viewed their own abstinence from forbidden meats as a token of peculiar sanctity, and, of course, regarded other nations, who wanted this sanctity, as vile and detestable. They considered themselves as secluded by God himself from the profane world by a peculiar worship, government, law, mode of living, and country. Though this separation from other people, on which the law respecting food was founded, created in the Jews a criminal pride and hatred of the Gentiles; yet it forcibly operated as a preservative from idolatry by precluding all familiarity with idolatrous nations."

The separation thus effected is distinctly avowed as a principal reason for this remarkable portion of the Mosaical law (Lev. xx. 25, 26). But at the same time there is no indistinct reference to some inherent unsuitableness in the articles of food to which the prohibition extends. These were as follows:—

1. Quadrupeds which do not ruminate, and have not feet completely cloven. This of course excluded all solid-footed animals, such as the horse and ass, as well as those whose feet are imperfectly divided, such as the camel, all many-toed animals, such as the hare and *shaphan* which appears to be the Syrian hyrax and not the "coney" or rabbit, as in our version. This animal has only of late been identified with the shaphan. It is rather abundant in the region wherein the Israelites wandered forty years. Laborde describes it thus:—"These creatures are very lively in their movements, and endeavour to bite when they are caught. Their hair is brown yellow, which becomes pale as the animals grow old. In appearance they somewhat resemble a guinea-pig. Their legs are all of the same length, but the form of the feet is peculiar; instead of nails or claws, they have three toes in front and four behind, and they walk, like rabbits, on the whole length of the foot. The Arabs call it el-Wabber, and know no other name for it. It is common in this part of the country (about the Elanitic Gulf), and lives upon the scanty herbage with which the hills in the neighbourhood of springs supply it. It does not burrow in the earth, its feet not being calculated for that, but it conceals itself in the natural holes or clefts which it finds in the rocks." None would suppose that this animal had much resemblance to a rhinoceros, yet Cuvier has shown that the skeleton offers, on a small scale, a great resemblance to those of the rhinoceros and tapir; and from this he powerfully argues the importance of anatomy in determining the real conformities of animals.

The prohibition extended also to all non-ruminant animals, even though cloven-footed, such as the hog. In Lev. xi. 29, several of the interdicted animals are specified by name, such as the weasel and the mouse. The word rendered "mouse" is *akbar*, and means the jerboa, which is found abundantly in the deserts of Syria and Arabia The jerboa is about the size of a large rat, and its movements have considerable resemblance to those of the kangaroo. Though forbidden to the Hebrews, it is caught and eaten with much satisfaction by the desert Arabs, nor do the inhabitants of towns object to eat it. Other animals are prohibited by names which, although rendered by "tortoise," "ferret," &c., in the authorized version, are supposed to denote various kinds of lizards, which abounded in Egypt and Palestine, and in the desert which lies between these countries. In Deut. xiv. 4, 5, some animals are named as specimens of those which might be eaten. These are the ox, the sheep, the hart, the roe-buck (the Arabian gazelle), the fallow-deer, the wild goat (ibex), the pygarg (*antilope addax?*), the wild ox (the original word more probably denotes the North African or dorcas gazelle), and the *zemer*, which some take to be the giraffe, and others the kebsch, or *ovis tragilaphus*, figures of which are given in p. 49, and which are often represented in Egyptian monuments; this animal is still found in the mountains of Sinai and Edom.

SUNDAY XV.—THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.



IN Jeremiah there are several interesting allusions to birds, which it seems desirable to bring together in the present page. In viii. 7, there is the following beautiful allusion to the periodical migrations of certain kinds of birds:—"Yea, the stork in heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow observe the time of their coming: but my people know not the judgment of the Lord."

On this subject the reader will be pleased to see Mr. Sharon Turner's remarks, in his 'Sacred History of the World' (i. 327). "One of the most special appointments of the Creator, as to birds, and which nothing but this chosen design and corresponding ordainment can explain, is the law that so many kinds shall migrate from one country to another, and most commonly at vast distances from each other. They might have been all framed to breed, be born, live, and die in the same region, as occurs to some, and as quadrupeds and insects do. But he has chosen to make them travel from one climate to another, with unerring precision, from an irresistible instinct, with a wonderful courage, with an untiring mobility, and in a right and never-failing direction. For this purpose they cross oceans without fear, and with a persevering exertion that makes our most exhausting labours a comparative amusement. Philosophy in vain endeavours to account for the extraordinary phenomenon. It cannot discover any adequate physical reason. Warmer temperatures are not essentially necessary to incubation, nor always the object of the emigration; for the snow-bunting, though a bird of song, goes into the frozen zone to breed, lay, and nurture its young. The snow-bird has the same taste or constitution for the chilling weather which the majority recede from. We can only resolve all these astonishing journeys into the appointment of the Creator, who has assigned to every bird the habits, as well as the form, which it was his pleasure to imagine and to attach to it. The watchful naturalist may hear, if not see, several migrations of those which frequent our island, both to and fro, as spring advances, and as autumn declines; but as they take place chiefly in the night or at early dawn, and in the higher regions of the atmosphere, they are much oftener audible than visible to us on the surface of the earth."

The reader may also be referred to a note on this subject in the 'Pictorial Bible,' under the present text. There, among other matter, will be found the following extract from Mr. Kirby's 'Bridgewater Treatise,' which we cannot resist the opportunity of bringing under the notice of our younger readers, as it develops the sufficient object in these migrations, which appears to have escaped the observation of Mr. Turner.

"If we give the subject of the migration of animals due consideration, and reflect what would be the consequence if no animals ever changed their quarters, we shall find abundant reasons for thankfulness to the Almighty Father of the Universe, for the care he has taken of his whole family, and of his creature man in particular, consulting not only his sustentation and the gratification of his palate, by multiplying and varying his food, but also that of his other senses, by the beauty, motions, and music of the animals that are his summer or winter visitors: did the nightingale forsake our groves; the swallow, our houses and gardens; the cod-fish, mackerel, salmon, and herring, our seas; and all the other animals that occasionally visit their several haunts,—how vast would be the abstraction from the pleasure and comfort of our lives!

"By means of these migrations, the profits and enjoyments derivable from the animal creation are also more equally divided—at one season visiting the south, and enlivening their winter; and at another adding to the vernal and summer delights of the inhabitant of the less genial regions of the north, and making up to him for the privations of winter.

"Had the Creator so willed, all these animals might have been organised so as not to require a warmer or a colder climate for the breeding or rearing of their young; but his will was, that some of his best gifts should thus oscillate, as it were, between two points, that the benefits they conferred might be the more widely distributed, and not become the sole property of the inhabitants of one climate; thus the swallow gladdens the sight both of the Briton and African; and the herring visits the coasts, and the salmon the rivers of every region of the globe. What can more strongly mark design and the intention of an all-powerful, all-wise, and beneficent Being, than that such a variety of animals should be so organised and circumstanced as to be directed annually, by some pressing want, to seek distant climates; and, after a certain period, to return again to their former quarters; and that this instinct should be productive of so much good to mankind, and at the same time be necessary, under its present circumstances, for the preservation and propagation of the species of these several animals?"

All the birds named in this verse are well-known migrants, and as such are found in their season in Palestine.

The Stork is known in Scripture by a name, *Chasidah*, which may be translated by "kind;" in manifest allusion to the great kindness of disposition, the almost human consideration manifested by the pairs, and by the old ones to the young, and (as is said) by the young to the old. Their constant return to the same localities in towns and upon the tops of buildings, also suggested the idea of local attachments, to which, by the associations which they convey, the notion of *kindly* dispositions is inseparably connected. Besides, its constant return, as often happens, to the higher points of those house-tops to which the inhabitants themselves constantly resort, conveys the notion of personal and family attachment; and it is impossible to see these large and respectable-looking birds return to the same house-top year after year at the appointed time, and to the same large nest every evening after the labours of the day, making themselves so quietly comfortable, without regarding them as old and attached members of the family, or retainers of the house. They are not in the slightest degree disturbed by persons walking, discoursing, singing, or playing music within three yards of them. And the manner in which they turn or lift up their heads when one comes to the house-top, and then relapse into repose, or resume their former posture, implies something like personal recognition; nor is there much reason to doubt that they do become acquainted with the persons of the inmates of the house which they have chosen for their own domicile. The degree of confidence in man which all this implies is never in any country abused. In some countries the murder of a man would occasion far less sensation than the killing of a stork. In many places this is a criminal offence punishable by the laws, and in others the slayer of a stork would be very roughly handled, if not torn in pieces, by the populace. It is known that many persons in high station, in the countries which the stork frequents, have attributed all the calamities of their lives to their having unintentionally destroyed a stork; and there are thousands now living in the world who would consider this as nearly the greatest misfortune which could befal them.

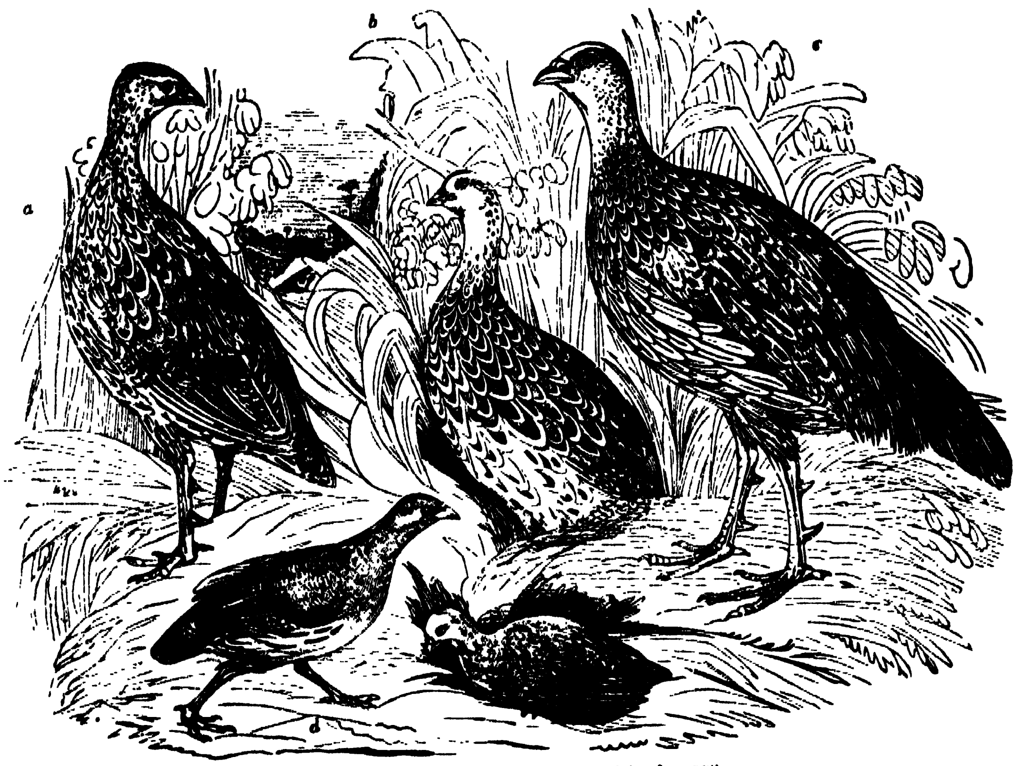
This confidence of the stork in man is, however, a grave and respectful, not a familiar and intrusive confidence. We have seen a great deal of storks first and last; but can remember no instance of their descending from their station—in or close by the nest, upon the screen wall, turret, or wind-chimney—to the terraced roof itself, or of their manifesting any inclination or readiness to cultivate any closer intimacy with man.

It was, doubtless, under such aspects as these that the stork appeared to the Israelites in Palestine.

The other birds mentioned in this verse are too well known to require particular notice.

In xvii. 11, there is an interesting allusion to a bird, called in Hebrew *kore*, which our version regards as a partridge:—"As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not." This has been curiously illustrated by different commentators, but the allusion seems to be to the sedulous anxiety with which this bird sits upon and watches the eggs, which are nevertheless more than commonly liable, from the exposed situations in which the nest is placed, to be trodden under foot, or devoured by the carnivorous animals, notwithstanding all the care of both the parent birds, and the wiles by which they seek to divert attention from their charge. Partridges are not birds of the mountain; but some of them, more especially those red-legged species which most abound in Palestine, are partial to the upland brushwood, and from this we obtain the explanation of David's expostulation with Saul, "The King of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains."

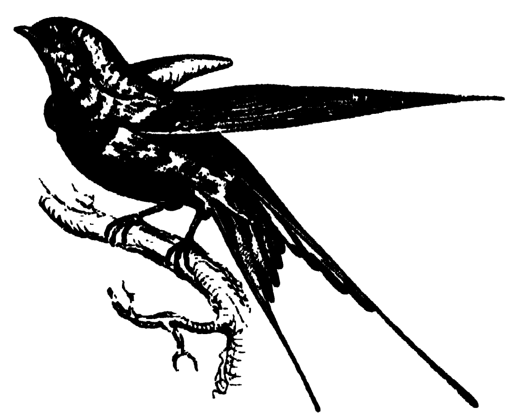
From this last text it is clear that partridges were hunted by the Hebrews, and probably the mode of hunting thus referred to is that still practised by the Arabs, who observing that these birds become languid and fatigued after they have been hastily put up once or twice, rush in upon them and knock them down with their staves. Tame partridges in cages are also employed to decoy into a net the coveys within hearing; and to this also there appears to be an allusion in Eccles. xi. 30.



401.—Oriental Partridges. Petris Dwyreiniol —Jer. xvii.
a, Clapperton's Francolin ; b, Rüppel's Francolin ; c, Erckel's Francolin ; d, Common Partridge.



402 – Collared Turtle.
Y Durtur Golerog.



398.—Swallow of Palestine.—Jer. viii.
Gwennol Palestina.



399.—Stork.—Jer. viii.
Y Ciconia.



400.—Crane.—Jer. viii.
Yr Aran.



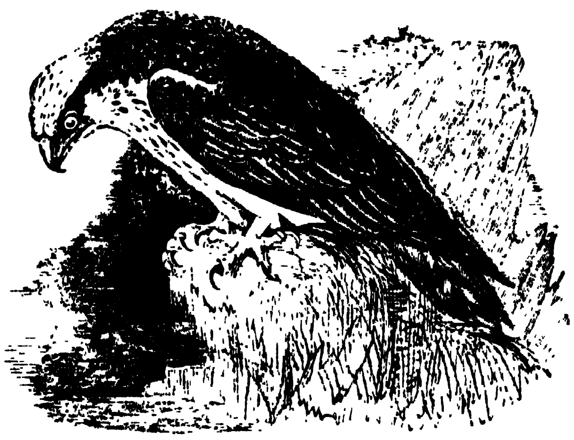
409 —Heron.
Y Crŷr.



404.—Hoopoe.—Lev. xi.
Y Gornchwigl.



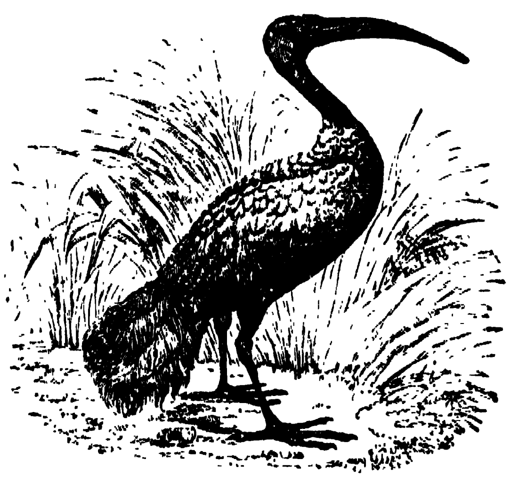
405 —Cormorant.—Lev. xi.
Y Fulfran.



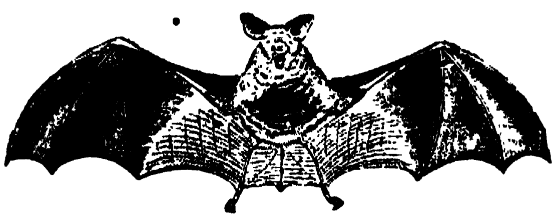
403 —Osprey.—Lev. xi.
Y Fôr-wennol.



410.—Ostrich.—Lev. xi.
Yr Estrys.



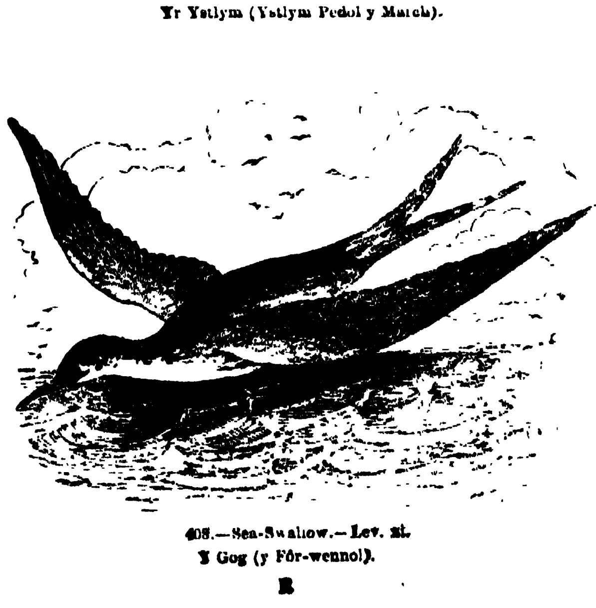
406.—Ibis.—Lev. xi.
Y Ddylluan.



411.—Horseshoe Bat.
Yr Ystlym (Ystlym Pedol y March).



407.—Hawk.—Lev. xi.
Y Gwalch (y Cudyll).



408.—Sea-Swallow.—Lev. xi.
Y Gog (y Fôr-wennol).



412.—Aquiline Vulture.
Y Fwltur Eryraidd.

SUNDAY XVI.—BIBLE HISTORY.

THE fat and other heavy and innutritive parts of even clean animals are forbidden. They were set apart, as being consecrated to God, and were the parts usually consumed on the altar; a religious sanction being thus given to the inhibition.

3. Blood was also forbidden, and on the same grounds, as being consecrated to God; for which reason none but animals regularly slaughtered, so as to discharge the blood completely from the body, could be eaten.

4. Serpents, and creeping vermin, also certain insects which sometimes fly and sometimes walk or creep upon their feet. An exception is, however, made in favour of locusts and other insects, which, besides four walking legs, have two larger springing legs (*pedes saltatorii*).

5. With respect to *birds*, no particular characters are given for dividing them into classes, as "clean" or "unclean;" but judging from those that are specified, as far as the obsolete nature of the Hebrew names will admit, it will be found that birds of prey generally are rejected, whether they prey on lesser fowls, or on animals, or on fish; while those that eat vegetables are admitted as lawful. So that the same principle is observed, in a certain degree, as in distinguishing quadrupeds.

The birds particularly named in Lev. xi. 13—19, are the eagle, ossifrage, osprey, vulture (kite), raven, owl. The word rendered "owl" is *hath-hayyanah*, and is now supposed to mean the ostrich: it has indeed been questioned whether the ostrich exists in Syria; but Burckhardt assures us that they are found in the plains of the Haouran, east of the Jordan, and that some are caught almost every year within two days' journey of Damascus. Night-hawk, cuckoo (more probably the sea-swallow), hawk (sparrow-hawk), little owl (barn-owl), cormorant, great owl (the word is *yansuph*, and probably denotes the Ibis), swan (*tinshemeth*, an uncertain bird), pelican, gier-eagle (in the original *racham*, which probably denotes the aquiline vulture (*vultur percnopterus*), which is found in every part of Syria and Palestine, particularly around the Lake of Tiberias, and on the plains of Philistia. It feeds on carrion, and is of great use in clearing away offal or dead carcasses. For this usefulness it is much respected, notwithstanding its grim aspect. The Rev. V. Monro saw one of these birds disputing with a wolf the possession of a dead buffalo in the plains of Sharon. Stork, heron, lapwing (the word *anapha* more probably denotes the hoopoe), and the bat, which, as a flying animal, is here classed among birds.

6. All *fish* not having both fins and scales are declared unclean.

Now, in a warm climate, the heat, relaxing the fibres of the stomach, makes digestion more slow and difficult than in our colder climes, and therefore renders unwholesome and indigestible to Orientals many articles of diet in which we find nothing disagreeable. A practical illustration of this may be found in the difference in our own appetites and digestive powers in winter and in summer. It is not, therefore, necessary to contend that the prohibited food was in itself, and in all climes, injurious or improper, but that it was so in the particular clime and country which the Hebrews were destined to inhabit; or, at least, that there it was less suited for use than the sorts of food which were declared to be "clean." In this, as in other instances, the law was suited to a particular country, and was never intended for general use or application, as some have vainly supposed. It is, indeed, certain that the use of the kinds of food which the law prohibits is very apt, in warm climates, to produce various kinds of scorbutic and scrofulous disorders—to which disorders the Hebrews appear, by the way, to have been extremely liable. It is also certain that, generally speaking, *ruminating* animals concoct their food better than others which swallow it with little mastication, and therefore their flesh contains more of the nutritious juices and is more easy of digestion, and, consequently, of assimilation to the solids and fluids of the body, and on this account they are particularly wholesome and fit for food. The animals which do not ruminate concoct their food less perfectly; whence they abound in gross animal juices, which yield a comparatively unwholesome nutriment to man. Hence it has happened, in fact, that the chief supply of animal food is in most countries derived from animals which ruminate, but not so exclusively as among the Hebrews.

It is well known to all physiologists that the nutritive matter of animal food is contained chiefly in the muscular fibre; and it will be seen that the law restricted the Hebrews, as much as possible, to these parts, consecrating, and thereby prohibiting, the use of the fattest parts as well as the blood and the liver*—or, at least, one lobe of the liver,—all of which the physicians of our own day would be glad to exclude from the dietary of any nation.

The unwholesomeness of *blood* in any form, taken as food, no one, that we know of, has ever called in question; and that this was a reason for the very urgent prohibition of its use we may be well assured, without denying that other reasons of a moral or typical nature may also be found. Blood affords a very gross nutriment, and is exceedingly difficult of digestion, and in some cases it is actually dangerous to *drink* it, for if taken warm, and in a considerable quantity, it may prove fatal. Blood, being also highly alkalescent, particularly in warm climates, is subject to speedy putrefaction, and consequently that flesh will be the most wholesome, and best answer the purposes of life and health, from which the blood has been the most completely drained, and it will remain the longest suitable for food. Hence we see a sufficient reason for the extreme care of the law that no allowed animal should be used for food unless it were so slaughtered as completely to exhaust its blood. The many barbarous or superstitious customs of ancient times connected with the drinking of blood, and the eating of raw or even *living* flesh, which were prevented by this law, deserve also to be remembered, although they cannot be particularly specified in this place.

With respect to the distinction of *fish*, it is only necessary to observe that those which are without scales, such as the conger eel, and others, abound in gross juices and in fat which few stomachs are able to digest with ease.

Larcher† remarks that the flesh of the eel, and of some other fish, thickened the blood, and, by checking the perspiration, tended to produce the diseases connected with leprosy; and he thinks that it was for this reason that the Egyptian priests forbade such fish to be eaten, and, to render their prohibition effectual, caused them to be accounted sacred.

From what has been said, the conclusions of Lowman may very properly be stated as the result:—"The food allowed the Hebrew nation, as a holy people, were the gentler sort of creatures, and of most common use, such as were bred about their houses and in their fields, and were in a sort domestic. They were creatures of the cleanest feeding, and which gave the most wholesome nourishment, and were of a better taste, and might be had in greater plenty and perfection by a proper care of their breeding and feeding: they seem, therefore, naturally fit to be chosen as a better kind of food."

The Israelites continued a whole year among the mountains of Sinai, during which they received, through Moses, the laws by which their worship and their social and political relations were to be regulated, and the whole system under which they were thenceforth to live was brought into practical operation by the establishment of the priesthood and of the services connected with the tabernacle.

All this being completed, the order for removal was given, and they departed from the spot which had been the scene of so many great events in their history, and which was destined to become the source of images magnificent and terrible to their poets, and of awful retrospection to their latest descendants.

Their object was to proceed at once to take possession of their promised heritage—the land of Canaan; and this they would speedily have done, had not this been prevented by conduct similar to that which they had so often displayed before and after their arrival at Sinai. The route which was taken on this march probably lay in the direction to the head of the *eastern* arm of the Red Sea, and from thence up the great valley of Arabah, to the south of the Promised Land. We shall not trouble the reader with the perplexed attempts of commentators to arrange this route from the scanty materials which the books of Moses offer; but shall be content to report the principal circumstances which occurred by the way, and to offer such remarks as may assist in determining the locality of each occurrence.

The long repose in Sinai had, in some degree, unfitted the people for the fatigues of travel; and when again upon the march, they soon broke forth into murmurs and complaints. At this the divine anger was kindled against them; and to make them sensible of their offence, as well as to punish them for it, "The fire of the Lord

* The Bedouins have a singular appetite for eating the liver raw and warm of any sheep they kill, before they begin to dress the flesh. May not the consecration of the liver be expressly levelled at such a custom among the Hebrews?

† In Herodotus, Euterpe, lxxi.

burnt among them," and consumed many persons on the outskirts of the camp. The fire of the Lord is a term often applied to lightning in the Scriptures, and many suppose that this was the agent employed on this occasion. Others think that the fire broke forth from the cloud that rested over the tabernacle; but in that case it would seem as if the fire would have burned in the centre rather than in the outskirts of the camp. There are some who allege that the "fell simoom," or hot pestilential wind, was probably the agent of this terrible chastisement. But the natural effects of this wind have always been much exaggerated, and in the quarter where the circumstances occurred no serious consequences from this wind are ever experienced. The alternative of the lightning, or of the fire from the cloud, may, therefore, be referred to that which attempts to give the most of natural effect to this visitation. At the prayer of Moses this fire ceased its burning, and the prophet called the place Taherah, to commemorate the occurrence.

If, from the perversity of man's fallen nature, anything were incredible, it would seem to pass belief that any set of people should be found, almost immediately after this, clamouring for meat. The fact seems to have been that the fatigues of travel created a craving for some more substantial diet than the manna, of which they began to speak detractingly, saying, "Our soul loatheth this light food." Then they looked back wistfully upon the abundant and various fare of Egypt; and these liberated bondmen, so unworthy of the freedom which had been so wonderfully won for them, even wept as they exclaimed "Who shall give us meat to eat? We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely, the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick. But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all but this manna before our eyes" (Num. xi. 5, 6). When Moses heard the people weeping and groaning after this fashion at the doors of their tents, his heart was filled with displeasure and concern. He knew that the Lord could not but be angry: but this time, instead of first seeking to avert the awful effects of that anger, he could not refrain from giving vent to his own anguish and despair. Addressing the Lord, he said, "Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? And wherefore have I not found favour in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? . . . Whence should I have flesh, to give this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh, that we may eat. I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight, and let me not see my wretchedness."

The first care of the Lord was to relieve his distressed servant from a portion of that burden which he complained of being too heavy for him, by directing him to take seventy of the elders of Israel to be his assistants in the government of the people. He was himself to select such as he knew to be possessed of the requisite abilities and discretion, as well as of influence and authority in their several tribes. These he was to bring to the door of the tabernacle for the approval of the Divine King, who was pleased to promise that he would endue them with special wisdom, and impart to them a portion of that spirit which rested with Moses himself. This was done; and when the Divine influence passed upon these venerable men, "They prophesied and did not cease." The Lord was further pleased to assure Moses that the people should have the meat for which they craved, and that not for a day only, but for a month. And so it happened. The miracle of the quails was repeated. A vast flight of them was driven onward by a vehement wind; and dropped, wearied with their flight, in and around the camp of the Israelites. They lay above a yard deep upon the ground for many miles around, and utterly incapable of flying away. The people were engaged for thirty-six hours in collecting them in such quantities as they desired: and those which they could not consume while fresh, they salted and dried, according to a practice much followed in Egypt, and which they had doubtless learnt there. The people fed so greedily on this poultry, that they speedily began to loathe the meat they had so earnestly desired: and the Lord, having evinced his power by this marvellous supply of food, next manifested his anger by a grievous pestilence—probably generated from the bodies of the vast quantities of birds which had been left upon the ground—which swept away great numbers of the people.

The next movement was to Hazeroth, which seems to be identified with the present fountain El Hudhera. Here is the only perennial water in those parts, and it is tolerably good, though slightly brackish. It is lamentable to state that at Hazeroth an outcry was raised against Moses by no less persons than his brother Aaron, the high-priest, and his sister Miriam. It is difficult to penetrate the grounds of this most painful outburst. The text states, that it was "because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman." It must have been from some jealousy of the influence of this wife, whose arrival probably made Miriam feel that she was no longer the chief woman of the camp. That the discontent originated with her, and was merely taken up by Aaron, appears from the fact that Miriam alone was punished. The movement of the cloudy pillar to the door of the tabernacle produced an awful pause, in the midst of which the voice of the Lord was heard vindicating the authority and divine mission of Moses, which would therefore seem to have been more or less directly called in question. The result was, that Miriam was struck with leprosy, the sight of which brought Aaron to his senses. He confessed their folly to Moses, and interceded for their sister, who, at the prayer of Moses, was restored, but for seven days remained under legal exclusion from the camp.

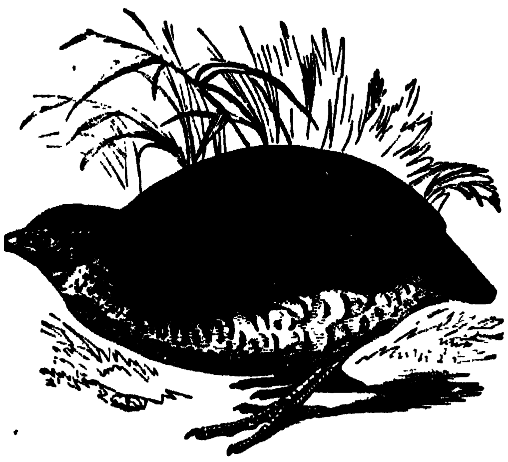
Nothing more is recorded until the Israelites arrived at Kadesh-barnea, where they made a pause to arrange their plans of operation against the Canaanites. It has until lately been usual to fix this difficult position in sacred geography about midway on a line drawn between the southern end of the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean. The editor of the 'Pictorial Bible,' however, conceived that this could not agree with the history, which required it to be on the borders of Edom, near the opening of the great valley (El Gheoyr), which leads through the mountains of Edom into the eastern plains beyond. He therefore placed it at a point on the Wady Arabah which these conditions indicated: and this is one of the many critical emendations of the current allocation of sites, which have since been confirmed and established by the actual observations of Professor Robinson.

As the Israelites were unacquainted, except from report, with the condition of the country which they were about to invade, and with the character of its inhabitants, Moses here made choice of twelve eminent men, one from each tribe, for the dangerous and confidential service of exploring the land of Canaan. They traversed the country in its whole length, and found it a beautiful country—a land of hills and valleys, watered by rivers and streams, and in all respects very different from the land of Egypt, with which they were best acquainted. Its luscious fruits were also very different; the kinds most abundant being such as were very scarce, very poor, or altogether unknown in Egypt. With these they were so taken, that they determined to carry samples with them on their return to the camp. Among the rest, was a magnificent cluster of grapes from the valley of Eshcol, which they carried "on a staff between two," partly from its great weight, and partly to prevent its being bruised on the road. The people were delighted with the sight of the grapes, the pomegranates, and the figs which the spies brought home: and the latter did not conceal the natural advantages of the country. "We came," said they to Moses, "to the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it is a land flowing with milk and honey, and this is the fruit of it." But at the same time, they declared that this fine land was in the occupation of powerful and well-armed nations, dwelling in strongly fortified towns; and they gave it as their own opinion that the Israelites were utterly unequal to the invasion and conquest of such a country.

This was woful news for the Hebrews, who forthwith broke forth, as usual, into complaints against Moses for having brought them out of the land of Egypt, and into the wilderness, on this impracticable undertaking. Two of the explorers, Joshua and Caleb, loudly expressed an opinion different from the others, and avowed their belief that the host was fully equal to the enterprise which lay before it. But their testimony—the testimony of two against ten—availed little. The impression had been given, and could not be removed even by the consideration that the power by which they were to possess themselves of Canaan was not in them, but in Him who had promised that land to their fathers, and whose power had snatched them from the grasp of the mightiest nation in the world.

The hope which lay before them being overthrown by the report of the spies, they now regarded themselves as a people without a home or country, and by no means inclined to persevere in the desert-life, so adverse to their early habits, which during the past year they had led. What remained for them, they argued, but to immolate the deceivers who had brought them thus far astray, and appoint a new leader who should conduct them back to the fertile banks of the Nile, where their voluntary return would perhaps be received as a sufficient atonement for the calamities which their departure had brought upon the Egyptians.

To this dangerous extent had the discontent grown: and it then became high time that they should be taught to respect that power which, both for mercy and punishment, they had so often experienced, but the very existence of which they seem on this occasion to have altogether forgotten.



413.—Quail.—Num. xi.
Sofliar.



414.—General View of Sinai.
Golwg gyffredinol o Sinai.



416.—Bedouins collecting Fruits in Palestine.
Bedowiniaid yn casglu Ffrwythau yn Palestina.



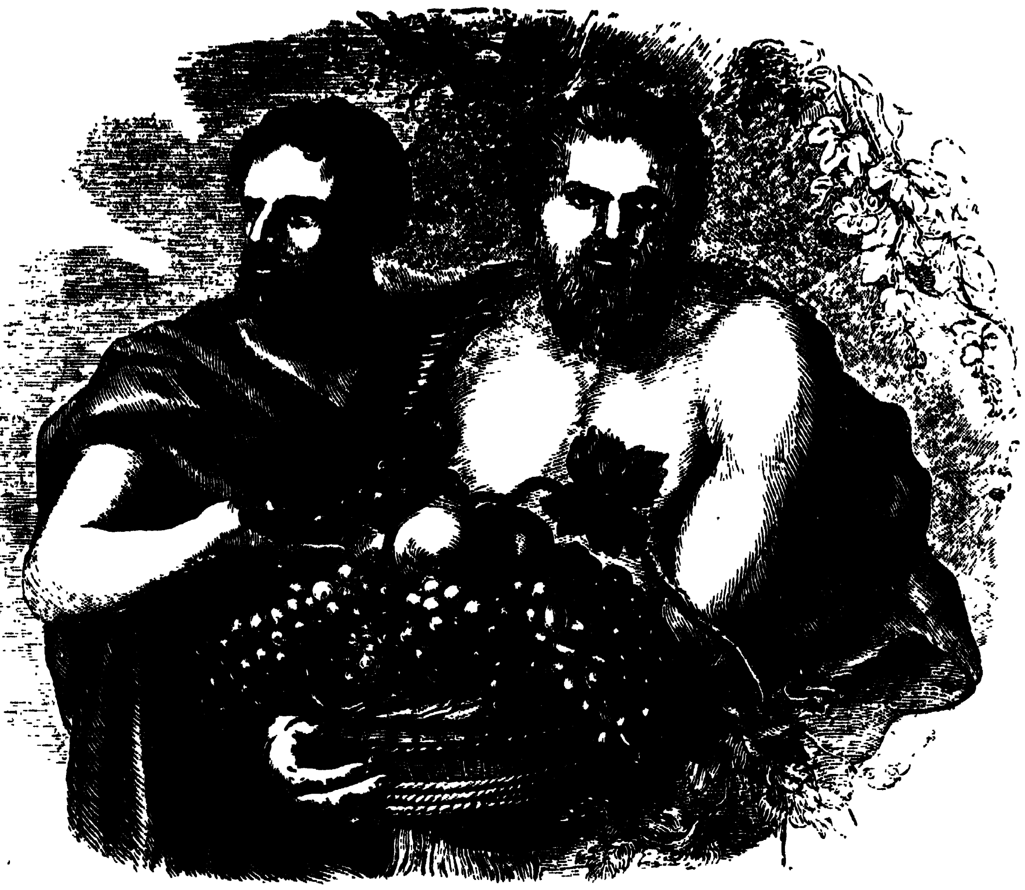
415.—Summit of Mount Sinai.
Pen Mynydd Sinai.



417.—Tents: Arab Encampment in the Wilderness. (Carne and Laborde.)
Pebyll: Gwersyll Arabaidd yn y Diffeithwch. (Carne a Laborde.)



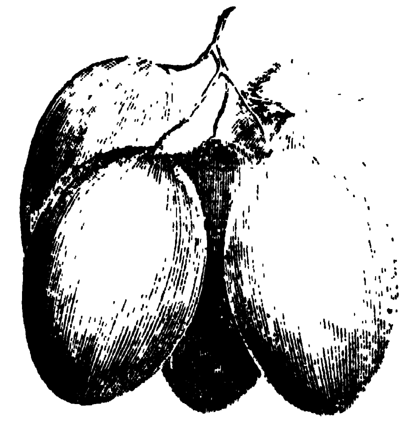
418.—Present Inhabitants of Sinai.
Preswylwyr Presennol Sinai.



421.—Spies, with the Grapes and Pomegranates. (Adapted from Rubens.)—Deut. i. 25.
Yr Ysbïwyr, gyda Grawnwin a Phomgranadau. (Wedi ei gyfaddasu o Rubens.)



422.—Pomegranate.
Pomgranad.



423.—Palestine Grapes.
Grawnwin Palestina.



419.—Death of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. (Hoet.)—Num. xvi.
Marwolaeth Corah, Dathan, ac Abiram.



420.—Aaron staying the Plague. (B. West.)—Num. xvi.
Aaron yn attal y Pla.

SUNDAY XVI.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

WHEN another said, "Lord, I will follow thee, but let me first go and bid them farewell that are at home in my house;" the reply of Jesus was in an agricultural metaphor—"No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God." This interdiction "to cast one longing, lingering look behind" is beautifully appropriate, from the peculiar necessity which the plougher is under of keeping his attention fixed upon the furrows and not allowing them to deviate; and this necessity was peculiarly imperative in Eastern countries, as the extreme shallowness of the furrow, where the plough does little more than scratch the surface of the soil, renders a deviation the inevitable effect of the slightest inattention. It is indeed from this circumstance that the proverb—for it is one—originated.

Jesus then entered the vessel which was to bear him to the other side of the lake.

While they were on the passage they encountered one of those sudden and furious storms which not unusually arise in lakes surrounded by mountains. The waves broke over the frail bark, and the danger was very great. And where was Jesus? He was quietly asleep in the hinder part of the vessel, and slept on undisturbed by the noise and uproar the tempest occasioned. At length the disciples, who, although familiar with the lake, were alarmed at this danger, went and awoke him, with the words, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" Christ immediately arose, and rebuked the wind, and said to the raging sea, "Peace, be still,"—and in an instant the storm went down. It did not merely abate, but ceased altogether, for "immediately there was a great calm,"—not only a calm, but a *great* calm. In one instant the storm was raging at the highest pitch, in the next scarcely a ripple was upon its surface. Jesus then turned to the disciples and said: "Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?" thus gently rebuking them for not having expected to be saved by him asleep as well as awake. We must certainly deem them to have been somewhat excusable in not having expected this even from him. They were filled with astonishment, and said one to another, "What manner of man is this that even the wind and sea obey him?" They had seen him heal the sick, which was no more than physicians professed to do; but now they see the winds and the sea submissive to him, and in this they recognise a superhuman power. Their words teach us that they now begin to perceive in Jesus something more than human greatness; for the sovereignty over the seas and winds is an attribute of God (Psalm lxv. 7).

Jesus then passed to the other side of the lake, and came into the country of the Gadarenes, of which Gadara was the chief town, and also the capital of Petræa. This country was inhabited by a mixed population of Jews, proselytes, and Syrians, who were looked down upon by the less mixed Jews of Judea. They were placed by them much on the same level with the Galileans, and deemed but one degree better than Samaritans.

Near the place where our Lord came to shore, there were many tombs, which were either excavations in the living rock or such roomy constructions as we still find in the East. These then, as now, often furnished places of shelter to those destitute of or expelled from human habitations: and at the present day such sepulchres are deemed the suitable abode of ghools and unclean spirits. From these tombs came forth a man to meet Jesus as he came up the road. This man was one of those demoniacs of whom we so often read in the New Testament. He was one of a very peculiar and terrible sort. He "had devils a long time, and wore no clothes, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains; because he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces; neither could any man tame him. And always, day and night, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying and cutting himself with stones." This man, seeing Jesus afar off, ran and worshipped him, and cried with a loud voice, acknowledging him as the Son of the most high God, and imploring him not to inflict torments upon him. This supplication is supposed to have been dictated by a vivid recollection in such unfortunate persons of the whips and chains with which they had been constrained, the severe operations to which they had been subjected, and the nauseous medicaments which had been forced upon them. The like of this they would naturally dread from one in whom they recognised the power to cast out devils. The man said, in the name of his indwelling demons, that their name was Legion, "for we are many;" and, perceiving that Christ would effect a cure, he in their name besought leave to enter into a herd of swine which was feeding hard by upon the mountains. This was done seemingly under the notion that, next to the sepulchres, the swine formed the most suiting habitation for them.

Jesus granted this request, "And the unclean spirits went out and entered into the swine; and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea (there were about two thousand), and were choked in the sea."

It has been remarked that this and the cursing of the barren fig-tree are the only examples of severity recorded of our Lord. The present case is usually explained by supposing that the owners were Jews, whom the Levitical law prohibited from eating or keeping swine. It is certain that they might not eat them, or touch their dead carcass (Deut. xiv. 8), but it would be difficult to find any order against feeding and taking care of them. The prohibition of touching the dead carcass implies that the living carcass might be touched; and it has been suspected that when Moses ordered the commutation of a shekel and a half in lieu of the first-born of unclean animals, he had chiefly swine in view. There is, in fact, no ground for the notion that the Jews might not keep swine, except that there seems a want of a sufficient reason for keeping them when they were not used for food. But they might rear them for sale to the heathen, among whom they were in great demand. And it appears that, in fact, they did so till about seventy years before Christ, when the ceremonial pollution occasioned by the introduction of a hog into the temple led to the issue of an order against keeping hogs. And the terms of this order led to the conclusion that the Jews then not only reared hogs for sale, but used their skins, and employed the fat for tallow and ointment. This order seems, however, not to have been very strictly observed; but its existence sufficed to justify Christ in public opinion for permitting this catastrophe. The owners, however, and the people of this neighbourhood, who seem to have had more of these herds, were by no means satisfied with this view of the matter. The swineherds ran away and spread the news around. This brought many people to meet Jesus, and that apparently with no very friendly intention; but when they saw the late furious maniac sitting quietly at the feet of Jesus, "clothed and in his right mind," they were afraid to act offensively, and were content to beseech the Lord that he would depart from them.

Jesus complied, and returned to the ship. The man who had been healed implored leave to go with him. He probably feared that he should again fall under the power of the devils, if separated from his deliverer. But Jesus would not allow this, but told him, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and how he hath had compassion upon thee." The man more than obeyed, for he went far and wide through Decapolis, proclaiming the great deed which had been wrought on his behalf.

On his return to Capernaum, the Apostle Matthew made a great feast for his master and fellow-disciples in his own house. The other persons who were present at this feast were chiefly "publicans and sinners," as might be supposed from the position which Matthew had filled, and the connections which that position had led him to form. The Pharisees failed not, as usual, to take malicious notice of this; and some of them said to the disciples, "Why eateth your master with publicans and sinners?" This was probably at the end of the feast, when they were leaving the house, for it was not likely that Pharisees would enter the house of a publican. Jesus heard this, and he himself answered, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. . . . I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

On the same occasion Jesus had to meet the implied objections of some of the disciples of John. "Why," they asked, "why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?" This, doubtless, refers to private fasts; such, probably, as John's disciples kept on account of the imprisonment of their master, and such as the Pharisees observed in obedience to the rules of their great doctors. Jesus beautifully answered: "Can the children of the bride-chamber (the attendants on the bridegroom) fast while they have the bridegroom with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast. But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days." This, while it justified the disciples of John for fasting, seeing that their bridegroom had been taken from them, excused his own disciples for not fasting, seeing that their bridegroom was still with them.

Jesus added several short parables, probably suggested by their present circumstances. One of them was—"No man putteth new wine into old bottles, else the new wine will burst the bottle and be spilled, and the bottle shall perish; but new wine must be put into new bottles, and both are preserved." And this is only intelligible with reference to the skin bottles, or bags made of the skins of kids, goats, and even oxen, such as are still in use throughout the East, and even in some parts of Europe, such as Spain, Hungary, Turkey, &c. Nor have they been unknown in this country. And in some of our signs, such as "The Old Leather Bottle," may possibly be traced a reference to the times when crusades and pilgrimages occasioned a more constant intercourse with the East than has been known in modern times.

While Jesus was speaking, one of the chief men of Capernaum, as shown by his office as one of the rulers of the synagogue, came and threw himself at his feet. His name was Jairus. He had one only child, a daughter, and she lay at the point of death. All help had been vain, and now, in his despair, he came to Jesus, whom he had, probably, in more prosperous days contemned. "Come," he cried, "and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live." This faith was less than that of the centurion, who deemed that a word from Jesus might suffice to heal the distant sick. Jesus, however, went, attended by his disciples, and followed by a great throng—the greater, perhaps, from the circumstance that Jairus was an eminent and well-known person at Capernaum. As they went along, Jesus turned suddenly round, and demanded, "Who touched my clothes?" The disciples, justly surprised at the question, said, "Master, the multitude throng thee, and press thee, and sayest thou who touched me?" But Jesus knew that some one had touched him with a purpose, for he perceived "that virtue had gone out of him." He said so: and then an afflicted woman cast herself at his feet, and acknowledged the fact. Twelve long years had she been afflicted with an issue of blood, and in that time she had spent all her substance in seeking aid of the physicians, and was nothing bettered, but rather worse. She then heard of Jesus, and repaired to him. But when she saw him in all that crowd, her heart seems, in one respect, to have failed her; she had not courage to arrest his progress and reveal her peculiar maladies in that boisterous audience. But her faith strengthened as her courage failed; and she thought within herself that if she could but manage to touch the hem of his garment she should be cured. She did so; and instantly she felt within herself that her cause of grief had departed from her. All this she declared as she lay trembling at the feet of Jesus. He was struck by this act of strong faith, and said to her, "Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole: go in peace." We only add, that touching or kissing the hem of the garment is an act of great and reverential respect throughout the East; and that the "hem" of our Lord's garment was probably that hem or fringe which the law required all Jews to wear, and which is still worn by the Jews of all countries, whatever be their ordinary garb, when actually engaged in the services of their religion.

While this was passing, some persons came from the house of Jairus, apprising him that his daughter was actually dead, and that, therefore, he need not trouble "the Master" any further. Jesus heard this, and addressed to Jairus the consolatory words, "Be not afraid; only believe, and she shall be made whole." These comforting words went to the heart of the bereaved father, and he proceeded with Jesus in silence to his own house. On arriving there, it was found to be already changed to the house of death. The wailing women and the minstrels were already there, the doleful plaints of the former and the mournful notes of the latter filling the whole place with the well-known sounds of mourning for the dead. When Jesus entered he said, "Why make ye this ado and weep? The damsel is not dead but sleepeth." Knowing that she was really dead, and understanding these words literally, the audience laughed him to scorn. Leaving them to be instructed by the event, Jesus entered the chamber of the dead maiden, attended only by the afflicted parents, and by his favoured disciples, Peter and the sons of Zebedee. In their presence he approached the corpse, and taking the hand, said, "Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise." And instantly the hand which he had taken obeyed the impulse which his had given, and she arose full of life and health from that couch on which she had sickened and died. To evince that she was not only alive, but well, Jesus ordered food to be set before her, of which, to the unutterable joy of her parents, she heartily partook. Jesus departed not without enjoining the parents to keep the matter a secret. But their gratitude and wonder could not endure this restraint; and the news of this great event spread rapidly throughout the town and neighbourhood.

No one can fail to admire the ease and unostentatious simplicity which reigns throughout this transaction, as well as in the raising of the widow's son at Nain. The Divine tranquillity, the simple words "I say unto thee, Arise," speak the presence of one who is the conscious Master of all things—even of death.

The silence which the Lord imposed on the parents of the maiden was obviously founded upon the dangers which this news, inconsiderately spread, might bring upon his person and doctrine. His hour, as he repeatedly declared, was not yet come. The renown of this great miracle, after he had so recently raised the son of the widow of Nain, would be sure to bring upon him in tenfold activity the hate of his enemies, and lead them to plot against him, as actually happened afterwards, when he raised Lazarus from the dead. The time was coming when these miracles might be referred to by competent witnesses in proof of his Divine mission, and then the benefit which the cause of the Gospel must derive from them would be realized. There was, however, nothing contradictory in his appealing to his works in proof of his mission, as in John x. 37, 38, where he says—"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him." For he had only under particular circumstances enjoined this silence; and when it had been enjoined, silence had rarely been observed as he desired.

On his return from the house of Jairus, two blind men, hearing who passed by, followed after him, crying, "Thou son of David, have mercy on us!" This calling him "the son of David" was a recognition of him as the expected Messiah: and it is not a little remarkable that this, in Gospel narratives, comes from blind men almost exclusively. Is it that the celestial light "shines inward," in proportion to the privation of the outward sense? Is it that the inner vision is "purged with euphrasy and rue," till it is enabled to behold "things invisible to mortal sight?" Be this as it may, the blind were, in Christ's own time, ever the foremost to acknowledge him in his true character: and the blind of that, one would almost suppose, had left the heritage of their faith to the blind of latter ages; as among them we still find unusual intensity of love towards the person and character of Jesus Christ, unusual reliance of all the affections on him, and unusual strength of hope in his salvation and glory.

Jesus did not appear to notice them till he reached the house to which he was going; he then said to them, "Believe you that I am able to do this?" They answered "Yea, Lord;" on which he touched their eyes, and said, "According to your faith be it unto you." And they had much faith, for their eyes were opened. The light of day shone in upon them, and the visible glories of this beautiful world were no longer mysteries to them.

Soon after this our Lord once more visited what was considered his native place, attended by his disciples. On the first Sabbath after his arrival he taught in the synagogue. But the men of Nazareth were not now better prepared than formerly to respect his character and office. Their minds dwelt upon "all the disadvantages of his youth, and kindred, and trade, and poverty: still retaining in their minds the infirmities and humilities of his first years, and keeping the same apprehensions of him as a man and a glorious prophet which they had to him as a child in the shop of a carpenter" (Taylor). Jesus himself indicated the principle of their conduct to him by quoting the well-known proverb—"A prophet hath nowhere less honour than in his own country;" a proverb still constantly verified by the daily experience of many who, after having gathered renown and honour among strangers, find that in their native town the circumstances out of which they have risen, are far better remembered and more thought of than those to which they have attained, so that at home they are greater strangers than in remote cities and foreign lands. The influence of this feeling prevented the Nazarenes from seeing Christ in his true greatness; for it is emphatically remarked that "He could do no mighty works there because of their unbelief;" and this in two ways—for, first, their knowledge of his humble birth effectually prevented that implicit reliance upon his power which he invariably exacted, and which could alone render them worthy of his protection and help; and then, from the influence of the same feeling, they would not think it worth their while sedulously to bring their sick to Jesus, and humbly to seek his aid.

It was not long after this that Jesus conferred upon the twelve apostles power to accomplish such miracles as he had himself wrought, even to the extent of raising the dead; and they were then sent forth, two and two, to preach the Gospel throughout the country. Having dismissed them with an impressive charge respecting their course of proceeding, Jesus himself quitted Nazareth, and pursued his journey through Galilee.



424.—The Blind restored to Sight. (S. Ricci.)
Y Dall yn cael ei Olwg.



426.—The Fig-Tree.
Y Ffigysbren.



425.—Christ curing the Blind.
Crist yn iachâu'r Dall.



427.—Black Fig-Tree.
Y Ffigysbren Du.



429.—Christ raising the Daughter of Jairus. (Overbeck.)
Crist yn cyfodi Merch Jairus.



428.—Mustard.
Mwstard.




430 — Psalm lxviii.

ET God arise; and let his enemies be scattered.—1.

He is a father of the fatherless, and defendeth the cause of the widow.—5.




433.—Psalm lxxi.

N thee, O Lord, have I put my trust.—1.

Unto thee will I sing upon the harp.—20.

Psalm lxxii.

Give the king thy judgments, O God.—1.



432.—Psalm lxx.



434.—Psalm lxxii.



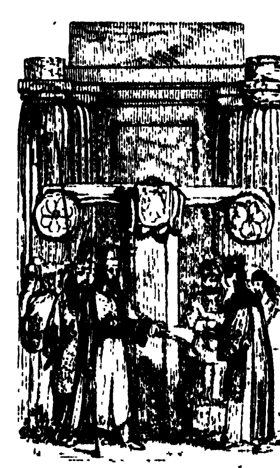
436.—Psalm lxxiv.



431.—Psalm lxix.



437.—Triumph of David. (Raffaelle.)
Buddugoliaeth Dafydd.



435.—Psalm lxxiii.

SUNDAY XVII.—THE PSALMS.

WE have now passed under review all the musical instruments which appear to have been in use among the Hebrews, excepting those which produced their sounds by being struck with the hand, to which our attention must now be turned.

Instrument of Percussion serves very well as a general title for this class of instruments. All the instruments of the tambourine or drum kind appear to be comprehended under the general word *tuph*, which is generally translated "tabret," and sometimes, as in Psalm lxviii. 29, and cxlix. 3, by "timbrel." Several sorts of drums are now in use among the Orientals; but it is by no means clear that any drum was among the instruments of the Hebrews. The only one represented in the Egyptian sculptures is a long drum shaped very much like one of the *tomtoms* of India, and used chiefly in the army, apparently for regulating its movements. It was beaten with the hands, and is represented in sculptures so old as the time of Moses.

About the tabret or tambourine there is, however, no doubt. It can be recognised by hints in Scripture indicating the mode in which it was used, as well as from the remarkable fact that not only the radical word *tuph*, but all the ancient translations, and the still living Oriental languages, give one and the same meaning. The instrument must be described generally as a wooden frame covered with skin, and struck by the hands. But they were by no means all of one shape; and it appears that the Hebrew word comprehends every known shape of the instrument, just as we should undoubtedly call every instrument of the kind a "tambourine," whether it were round, oval, square, or oblong.

Tambourines were undoubtedly known in Syria before the Hebrew fathers had any knowledge of Egypt, for we find that Laban lamented that no opportunity had been given him of sending Jacob away "with songs, with tabret, and with harp" (Gen. xxxi. 27). Miriam, the sister of Moses, and the females with her, accompanied their song of victory with the sound of this instrument (Exod. xv. 20). Job was acquainted with it (Job xvii. 6; xxi. 12), and David employed it in all the festivities of his religion (2 Sam. vi. 5). Isaiah adduces it as an instrument employed by voluptuaries, but left in silence on the breaking out of wars and desolations (Isa. v. 12; xxxiv. 8). The occasion in which this instrument is mentioned is always one of joy; and, for the most part, those who play upon it are females, who on this very account have the name of "timbrel-playing damsels" (Ps. lxviii. 25); and it is nowhere described as being employed in battle, or for any warlike purpose. In short, it was applied to exactly the same purposes as by other nations, who used it in dances, in attestations of gladness, at festivals, and on such-like occasions. So we find it represented in the Egyptian sculptures, and it is more than likely that the forms which are represented in these sculptures are the same as those of the Hebrew instruments. These forms are shown in the engravings. These are of three kinds, differing probably in sound, as well as in form: one is circular, another oblong, and a third consisting of two squares separated by a bar. They were all beaten by the hand, and used as an accompaniment to the harp and other instruments. Men and women used them, but most usually the latter, who are often represented as dancing to them unaccompanied by other instruments. From the imperfect representation of those in the tombs at Thebes, it is difficult to say whether the Egyptian tambourine had the same moveable piece of metal let into its wooden frame, as in those of the present day; but their mode of playing it was similar; and, as Sir J. G. Wilkinson remarks, from the manner in which it is held up after having been struck, we may venture to conclude that they were furnished with metal rings, for the free emission of whose sound this position was peculiarly calculated. These appendages of the tambourine were certainly very ancient. It is seen from the paintings at Herculaneum that the Greek tambourine was furnished with balls of metal, pendent from the front part, or from the centre of its circular rim, to which each appears to have been attached by a short thong. Here also, on classic ground, the instrument was mostly confined to women, and chiefly used in the festivals of Bacchus and Cybele.

There is even now no instrument of music more common in the East than the tambourine. And it is also constantly met with in Northern and Western Africa. The Arabian tambourine, which may be taken as a type of the whole, is a broad hoop covered with a stretched skin. In the rim there are usually thin round pulleys, or wheels of metal, which also make some noise. It is played in the same way as with us; and, indeed, our tambourine is derived from this indirectly through Spain, where it is called by a name *adufe*, which is no bad representative of the Hebrew *tuph*. No musical instrument is perhaps so much employed in Turkey as this. When the females in their harem dance, the time is always beaten with this instrument. It is called *doff*, in which word we again recognise the Hebrew *tuph*. It would seem that the Egyptian females, dancing and singing to the tambourine, and bearing palm branches and green twigs, were wont to visit the tombs of their deceased friends. Something of this may be traced in the Friday visit of the Moslem women to the cemeteries, and, what is more remarkable, the tambourine is still used on these occasions, when the death is recent, to accompany the notes of wailing. For the same purpose it is used by the professed wailing-women, when employed in the house of mourning. In this respect it seems now to occupy the place of the funeral pipe of the ancient Hebrews; and yet we are not sure that they had not some such use for the tambourine; for the image in which women in the act of mourning are described as "tabering upon their breasts" (Nahum ii. 7), would seem to have been derived from some such usage.

Painters usually represent the Hebrew tabret by a small kettle-drum, as in the engraving at p. 65, and although the tambourine is, without doubt, the instrument principally denoted, we should be reluctant to aver that a kind of kettle-drum may not have been included. We see something of this sort in the hands of the foremost of the Egyptian women represented in the cut. From its general shape, as well as from being beaten by the hands, it appears to have been similar to the present darookha drum of Egypt and Arabia. It is made of parchment strained and glued over a funnel-shaped case (often of pottery) which is a hollow cylinder, with a truncated cone attached to it. It is beaten by the hand, and when relaxed is braced by exposing it for a few moments to the sun or the heat of the fire. An instrument more resembling a kettle-drum is now used in Persia and other countries of Western Asia; indeed, it is admitted that our kettle-drum is derived from the East. Some think they can discover an instrument of this kind in the instrument called *magraiphah*, of which the Talmud makes mention. It is said to have stood between the ante-court and the altar in the temple, to have had ten holes, and in each of these holes a pipe, which likewise had ten holes, so that the sound would admit of one hundred variations. The occasions on which it was struck were the calling together of the priests to prayer, of the Levites to singing, and the conducting away of leprous persons to their purification. It seems, however, difficult to recognise a drum in this description, and Kircher makes it out to have been an organ!

We may conclude with noticing a few other instruments which come more properly in this place than any other.

Cymbals are often mentioned in the Psalms; and it is not doubted that instruments of this kind are really to be understood by the word thus translated. These instruments were known to the ancient Egyptians, of a shape nearly similar to our own, and made of a mixed metal, apparently brass, or a compound of brass and silver. The classical cymbals were also similar, and the same shape is still preserved in the East, although others of the form represented by the figures *a*, *b*, in the group of cymbals, are also in use. Cymbals were much employed in the religious processions and sacred mysteries of the ancients.

Allied to the cymbals are the castanets, which were much used by the ancients, and were known among the Egyptians. The ancient forms and modes of playing them are shown in the engravings from the paintings at Herculaneum. These were regarded as a kind of cymbals, and are supposed to be comprehended under that name. Indeed, there are passages in which two kinds of cymbals seem to be indicated, as in Psalm cl. 5, and there one is supposed to be the true cymbal and the other the castanet.

Others are for including the sistrum among the instruments of this class, and we are strongly of opinion that it is denoted by the word *shalishim*, which is in 1 Sam. xviii. 6, translated by "instruments of music." Whatever probability formerly existed in favour of this instrument is much strengthened by the recent discovery that it was much used in Egypt, especially in religious solemnities. The instrument consists of a metal frame, crossed by moveable bars of metal, which produced a kind of musical jingling when the sistrum was shaken by its cylindrical handles. In some cases the moveable bars were laden with moveable rings, which must have increased the clattering jingle this instrument seems to have been designed to produce. There is an actual specimen of one of these instruments in the British Museum.

SUNDAY XVII.—BIBLE HISTORY.

THE glory of the Lord" was then suddenly seen at the entrance of the tabernacle, and a voice came forth to Moses,—"How long will this people provoke me? How long will it be before they believe me for all the signs I have shown unto them? I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they." At the earnest intercession of Moses this doom was averted. But the sentence went forth that the rebels should never see the land promised to their fathers. They should wander in the wilderness till they had all died away, and their place become filled by the new generation, which was not of adult age at the time of this rebellion. The sudden stroke was spared; but they should all as certainly perish there, all as certainly leave their bones in the wilderness, as if their lives had that day been taken from them by the pestilence. The Lord would thus reserve the promised heritage for a new generation, more worthy and better trained than the perverse and ill-conditioned crew which had grown up in the land of Egypt. Joshua and Caleb, the two faithful explorers, were alone exempted from this doom; and they, alone, of all who were above twenty years of age at the time of the departure from Egypt, entered the Promised Land.

The people murmured greatly at this decree, which seemed to them in every way so terrible, that, forgetting they had heard the settled purpose of God, they sought to reverse it by an act of confidence and bravery, now as preposterous as their fears had been before. In spite of the earnest remonstrances of Moses, who pointed out to them that this was an act of disobedience against Him who had declared that they should not enter the land, a large body of the fighting men proceeded to invade the southern border, then occupied by the Canaanites and Amalekites, who came down against them and repelled them with fearful slaughter.

We are acquainted with the names of the principal stations which the Israelites occupied during the long period of their wandering, but few of these stations have been identified. The history of the wandering, during which the generation which left Egypt died out, is confined to the record of a few transactions, which, from the fact of their being thus recorded, we may take to be the chief incidents of that long period.

One of these was the case of the man who was found gathering sticks on the Sabbath-day, and who was taken to the outside of the camp and stoned to death on that account. The offence was a less simple breach of the Sabbath than may at the first view appear. Not only was the rest of the Sabbath-day broken by the act of labour, but the labour itself implied the contemplation of a further transgression in the kindling of a fire on that day for the preparation of food.

A still more serious event was the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. The two latter were chiefs of the tribe of Reuben, and the first a Levite, who appears to have been the author of the revolt. The chief ground of discontent appears to have been that the great honours and privileges of the priesthood had been limited to the family of Aaron. This seems to have displeased Korah, who, as an hereditary chief of the Levitical tribe, considered that in the tribe of Levi he had the highest claim to the dignity of the high-priesthood; and it also dissatisfied the Reubenites, who would see no reason why the tribe of Levi should enjoy these privileges, which custom and precedent assigned to the first-born, from whom they were descended. Thus the proud Levite could make common cause with the chiefs of Reuben as against Aaron, though, if Aaron had been set aside, a question between him and them would have been left for settlement. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that Dathan and Abiram were, in a great degree, the dupes of this Korah.

Having secured them, other persons of consequence and reputation were, through their influence, drawn into the confederacy, which eventually numbered two hundred and fifty "princes," or hereditary chiefs of divisions of the tribes, who were displeased to see all civil and ecclesiastical power engrossed by Moses and Aaron. This movement was very dangerous, not only from the station and influence of the parties, but from the position which they took in apparently advocating the rights of the whole people against the usurpations of the legislator and high-priest, whom they accused of "taking too much upon them," and of "lifting themselves up against the congregation of the Lord." They, therefore, openly contended that it was time that this extraordinary authority should cease, and that they and the other chiefs, the natural leaders of the people, should take part in the government. From this it would seem, that although the original complaint was levelled against the pontificate of Aaron, the aim was soon extended to the civil government of Moses, after the confederacy had been joined by chiefs who could advance no claim to the priesthood.

The Lord himself now interposed to vindicate the authority of his servants. Moses was directed to challenge those who aimed at the priesthood, to appear the day following before the Lord at the tabernacle, with censers to offer incense; and then it would be known whose services were acceptable to God, and whom he would have to minister before him. Accordingly, on the following day, all the revolters appeared in the court of the tabernacle, with censers in their hands, prepared to compete with Aaron the highest privileges of the sacerdotal office. That they thought themselves right, and their conduct deemed right before God, they showed by submitting to this awful appeal; but they were not the less culpable in shutting their eyes to the strong evidence by which the Lord had already made known his will in this matter, in a way not to be mistaken by any candid mind.

They were not unattended, for Korah had employed himself with great diligence, and very successfully, in exciting the people in this cause; so that a vast multitude assembled about the tabernacle to witness the result. An ominous intimation of that result was given by Moses, exhorting the people to retire and separate themselves from the revolters, that they might not share in their punishment. Such is the instinctive deference for established authority, that the great body of the people obeyed, and watched the issue at a safe distance. Dreadful was that issue. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, who had not come to the tabernacle, were swallowed up in their tents, at the doors of which they stood, for the earth "clave asunder" to receive them, and closed over them again. Nor did those who attended at the tabernacle escape, for "the fire of the Lord" broke forth among them and destroyed them all.

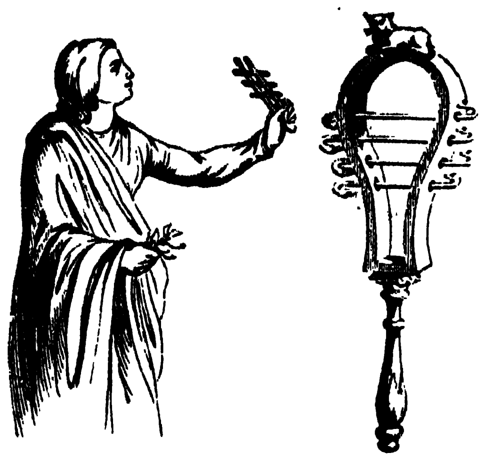
This great stroke stunned and subdued the people for the moment: but the discontent had taken deep root; and the very next day they assembled tumultuously, and accused them of having slain "the people of the Lord;" and proceeded to behave so outrageously, that Moses and Aaron were constrained to take refuge in the tabernacle.

This fresh outbreak was so displeasing to the Divine King, that, notwithstanding the earnest intercession of Moses, he proceeded to execute summary judgment upon the infatuated people. A pestilence instantly broke forth among them, which smote them down in great numbers. On perceiving this, the distressed prophet, careful only for their safety, ordered Aaron to take his censer and hasten forth among the dying Israelites. Aaron did so; and where he stood, burning incense "between the living and the dead," there the plague was stayed.

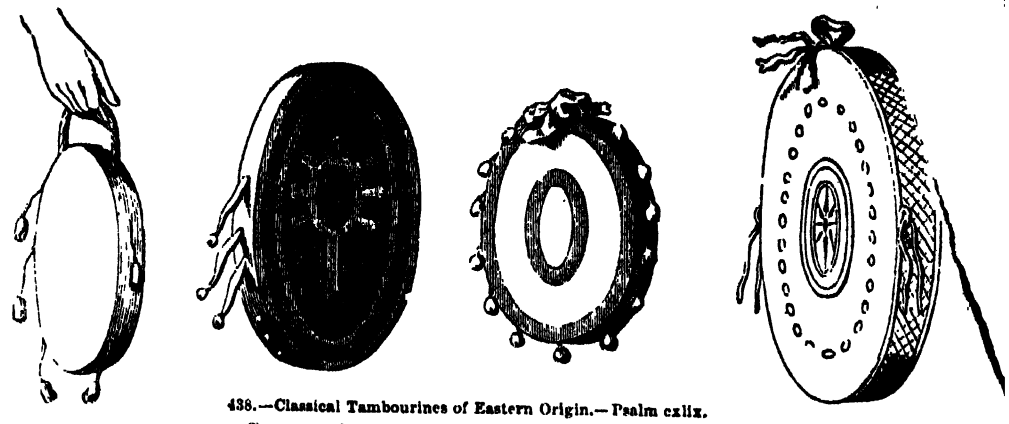
So widely spread and so deep was the disaffection which had been excited, that even these judgments did not altogether settle the minds of the people. It therefore pleased God to signify his will in a manner impossible to mistake, and to leave a standing monument of that intimation to future eyes.

It was directed that the hereditary chiefs of each of the twelve tribes should write his name upon his staff, that of Aaron being placed for the tribe of Levi. The twelve staves were then laid up in the tabernacle; and it was foretold that the Lord would make known his will concerning the priesthood by causing the dry staff of the chosen tribe and family to blossom. In the morning it was found that Aaron's staff had blossomed, and not only blossomed, but showed at the same time buds and fruit—the fruit of ripe almonds, while all the other staves remained unchanged. Thus, beyond all controversy, the Lord manifested his choice of the tribe of Levi, and of Aaron as his priest. The miraculous staff was then again laid up in the tabernacle as a standing record and testimonial of this transaction.

At length, the long term of wandering drew near its close. All but a few of those who were above twenty years of age at the time of the Exode were now dead; and those who were then under that age, had by this time reached the wane of life, or were even old and grey-headed. The active men forming the new generation had been born in the desert, and had none of those Egyptian reminiscences which had been the bane of their fathers, nor had their spirit been, like theirs, bent down under the yoke of bondage. They were a better and more manly generation. And it may be fair to attri-



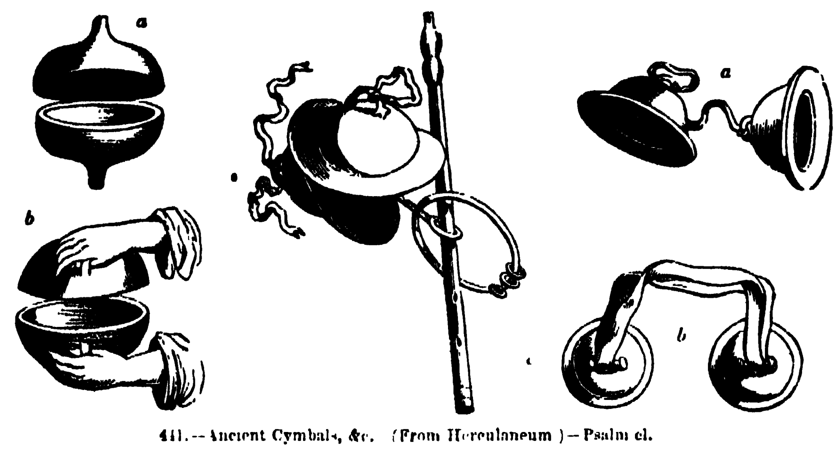
440.—Ancient Sistrums.—Psalm cl.
Sistrymau Hynafol.



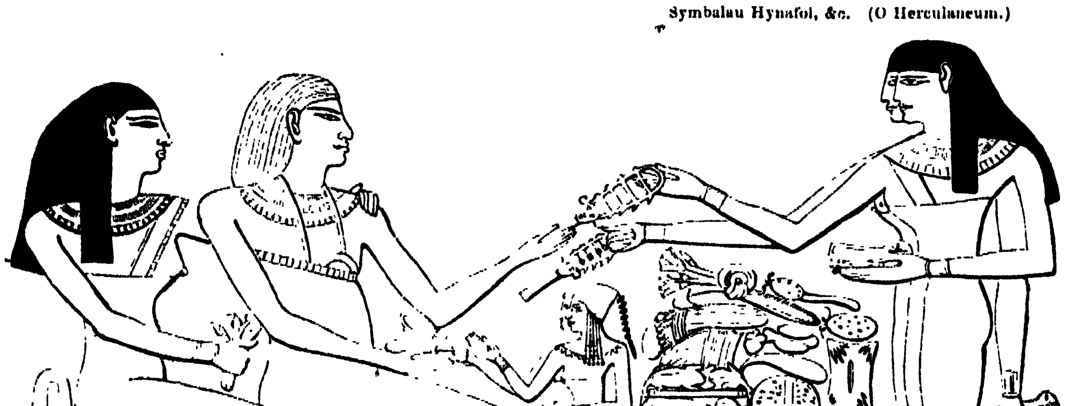
438.—Classical Tambourines of Eastern Origin.—Psalm cxlix.
Tympanau Classicalaidd o Haniad Dwyreiniol.



439.—Egyptian Tambourine-players. (From Rosellini.)—Psalm cxlix.
Chwareuyddion Tympanau Aiphtaidd.



441.—Ancient Cymbals, &c. (From Herculaneum.)—Psalm cl.
Symbalau Hynafol, &c. (O Herculaneum.)



442.—Sistrums. (From Rosellini.)—Psalm cl.
Sistrymau.



443.—Dancing Figures, with Castagnets. (From Herculaneum.)—Psalm cl.
Dawns-Luniau, gyda Chastenetiaid. (O Herculaneum.)



447.—The Brazen Serpent. (Rubens.)—Num. xxi.
Y Sarph Bres.



446.—Mount Hor.
Mynydd Hor.



444.—Defile in Idumea, in the Road from Palestine to Egypt. (From Laborde.)—Num. xx.
Bwlch yn Idumea, ar y Ffordd o Palestina i'r Aipht. (O Laborde.)



445.—Moses Striking the Rock. (Raffaelle.)—Num. xx.
Moses yn Taro'r Graig.

bute the misconduct into which they fell to the influence of the older men, who were not entirely free from the Egyptian taint, having been from ten to twenty years of age when the Israelites quitted the "house of bondage."

As the appointed time drew nigh in which they were to receive possession of their heritage, we find the hosts of Israel again approaching the south of Palestine, and encamping at their old station in Kadesh Barnea. Here Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, died and was buried. And here, the waters of the neighbourhood having become exhausted, the people gave vent to complaints painfully similar to those in which the past generation had been too apt to indulge. They were not, however, punished, probably because the want by which they were moved to complaint was real and urgent. Moses and Aaron were directed *to speak* to the rock, and told that waters should break forth at their word. Not content with merely speaking to the rock, which would much have enhanced the glory of the miracle, they *struck* it twice with vehemence, and not without impatient expressions. The waters came forth at the stroke: but the behaviour of the brothers on this occasion was displeasing to God, who declared that for this neither of them should enter the Promised Land. This seems a severe sentence. But it is to be borne in mind that the eyes of all Israel were upon these two men, and any indication in them of want of confidence, or of laxity in interpretation of the Divine commands, was likely to have the most dangerous consequences upon the minds and habits of the people, unless reprehended and punished.

Soon after, it became evident to the leaders of the Hebrews, that the Canaanites were too strong in the south to make it expedient for the untrained Israelites to invade the land in that quarter. It was therefore concluded to pass over into the country east of the Dead Sea and the Jordan, and, by crossing the river, invade the land in its most vulnerable quarter. To this end, it was desirable that the host should pass to the east country, through one of the valleys which intersect the mountains of Seir. These mountains were then, and long before, occupied by the descendants of Esau, under the name of Edomites; and to their king Moses sent a deputation with a very civil request for permission to pass through his territory. He was reminded of their common origin by the phrase, "Thus saith thy brother Israel;" and was assured of their pacific intentions, and that they would pay for whatever they required on the march, and abstain from touching even the wells of water without payment. But the king returned a very sharp refusal; and manifested an intention to resist by force of arms any attempt of the Israelites to pass through the valley to which their attention seems to have been turned. Out of regard to their brotherhood, the Israelites were forbidden to force a passage, and directed to return down towards the head of the Elanitic Gulf, and then pass eastward, and make their way to the north through the plains which lie beyond the mountains of Seir on the east.

In retracing their steps they had to pass Mount Hor, the loftiest and most conspicuous of all the Seir mountains. In front of this they rested; and it was here that Aaron received the intimation that the end of his life's journey had arrived. He was required to proceed to the summit of the mountain, "and die there." Accordingly, he ascended to the mountain top, arrayed in his pontifical vestments, and attended by Moses and Eleazar. He was there divested of his robes, which were placed upon his son, and then, after one look towards the land from which he was excluded, the utmost borders of which he could view from this high place, he resigned his spirit to God, and his corpse was buried there upon the mountain by Moses and Eleazar.

Thirty days the host of Israel mourned for the high-priest; and then they pursued their way.

On again continuing their way through a region parched with excessive drought, and destitute of water, the Israelites, who had hoped that when they arrived at Kadesh they had quitted the wilderness for ever, and were about to enter the Promised Land, began to murmur at the weary march before them, and to utter sharp invectives, not only against Moses, but against the Lord. This new provocation brought immediate punishment, for the Lord sent among them fiery serpents, by which many of the people were bitten and died. The serpents are called "fiery" from their colour, as some suppose, resembling polished brass, or, as others conceive, from the intense and fatal inflammation which their bites produced. Naturalists suppose this serpent to be the *Naja Tripudians*, or Hooded Snake, the hood of which, when inflated, has sufficiently the appearance of wings to explain the epithet "flying," which is applied to these serpents.

By this terrible judgment the people were made sensible of their fault, and implored Moses to intercede for the removal of the serpents. This he readily did. The serpents, however, were not immediately removed, but relief was granted after a very peculiar manner. Moses was directed to make a serpent of brass, similar in form to those which had bitten the people, and to fix it upon a pole or standard, which was to be set up in a conspicuous part of the camp. Every one then who was bitten, and raised his eyes to this brazen serpent, was healed of his deadly wound and lived. No means could be less suited than this in itself to give relief. And therefore it was merely designed that the sufferers should by this token express their dependence upon God, and that they looked to him alone for help and cure. If we may conceive that any wanted faith in this seemingly unlikely means of cure, and neglected to look up to the brazen serpent, he undoubtedly perished in his misbelief. It may thus be seen with what exquisite fitness Jesus refers to the brazen serpent as a symbol of himself: "For as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

After this the Israelites proceeded quietly on their way, without any event of consequence till they reached the brook Zared, which flows into the southern extremity of the Dead Sea. Here they paused awhile, and then proceeded to the Arnon, through the territories in the actual possession of the Moabites, who seem to have wanted the power more than the inclination to oppose their march. Beyond the Arnon lay the territory of which the Canaanitish nation called the Amorites had at some previous period dispossessed the Moabites, but which is still called in Scripture "the land of Moab." Without troubling themselves with antecedent questions, the Israelites, recognising the actual possessors, applied to Sihon, king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, for permission to march through his territories to the banks of the Jordan, beyond which lay the region against which their conquering mission was directed. Sihon, however, being related to and in alliance with the nations beyond the river, was by no means disposed to grant this permission, but took the field to oppose their march. This brought on the first battle fought by the new generation of the Israelites. They were victorious; Sihon was defeated, taken prisoner, and slain; and the conquerors took possession of his dominion, with all its towns. This conquest necessitated another. For they were attacked in their new possession by Og, the king of Bashan, who was in alliance with Sihon, and whom the Jabbok now only separated from the Israelites. This Og was "of the race of the giants;" and to give some idea of his height, we are told that his bedstead was thirteen and a half feet long by six feet broad, and that it was of iron, to sustain his enormous weight. This bedstead was long after preserved, as a curiosity and muniment, at the capital town of Rabbah. This gigantic monarch must have seemed very formidable to the Israelites; but over him also they were victors. Thus, contrary to their original intention, the Israelites came into possession of a fine and fertile country, extending from the Arnon to Mount Hermon, and full of cities "fenced with high walls, gates, and bars; besides unwalled towns a great many." The host, however, was not allowed to disperse itself over the new possession, desirable as it was, but remained encamped in "the plains of Moab," which lay immediately east of the northern part of the Dead Sea, and the lower course of the Jordan.

The neighbouring Moabites viewed these transactions with discontent and alarm; discontent at seeing the Israelites in possession of a country which had formerly belonged to themselves, and alarm at the settlement on their border of a people so powerful, as compared with themselves, and so manifestly favoured by heaven. The Moabites were then governed by a king called Balak, who was eager to attack the Israelites in their camp, but was afraid to do so while they, even as he felt, enjoyed the assurance of victory in the Divine favour. After much cogitation, the king arrived at the sage conclusion, that if he could contrive to lay them under a curse, potent enough to countervail the blessing of Jehovah, he might then meet them, at least on equal terms. But how was this to be brought about? There lived beyond the Euphrates a person called Balaam, who enjoyed a high reputation as one whose curse was irresistible for evil, and his blessing for good. To this person Balak sent a deputation, with costly gifts, inviting him to come and lay his curse upon the strangers, whom the message described in terms which give a good notion of the point of view in which the Israelites were regarded by the natives in their neighbourhood: "There is a people come out from Egypt: behold, they cover the face of the land, and they abide over against me. Come now, therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me: peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that we may drive them out of the land."

SUNDAY XVII.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

JUST about this time the birthday of Herod the tetrarch was celebrated with great festivity in the court of Galilee. On this occasion Herod was so much charmed with the dancing of young Salome (so Josephus calls her), the daughter, by her former husband, of that Herodias whom Herod had taken away from his brother Philip, that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she should ask. From the effect which this dancing produced upon the tetrarch, it would appear that it was not of that comparatively rude and unformed style of dancing which was anciently used by the Jewish maidens at public rejoicings; but that lascivious and pantomimic sort which, by the movements of the hands and other members of the body, expressed human manners and affections, and which had then lately been introduced from neighbouring nations into the Jewish court. The damsel was old enough to know the value of the promise thus given, and, instead of giving utterance to any girlish wish, went to ask her mother concerning the suit which she should prefer. Herodias hated John the Baptist on account of the protest he had uttered against her connection with Herod, but had never been able to prevail upon the tetrarch to bring him to any further punishment than imprisonment, and she seized with avidity the occasion now offered, by instructing her daughter to demand the head of the Baptist—"in a charger" (salver), a barbarously-minute addition, strikingly characteristic of a peculiarity often noticed in a woman's vengeance. Most men would have been content simply to demand the head of the Baptist; but she phrased it—"Give me here the head of John the Baptist in a charger:"—"*here*" and "in a charger!"

Herod was sorry that such a demand should have been made, for he had a sort of awe for the Baptist, and justly dreaded the effect which so barbarous an act might produce upon the people, by whom the prophet was held in high veneration. But as his oath had been taken in the presence of so many witnesses, he fancied that he could not draw back. The word was given; John was beheaded in the prison where he had so long been confined, and his head was brought in a charger to Salome, who carried it to her mother. All the circumstances of this transaction are exceedingly revolting, and give a lively idea of an age in which blood was poured out like water, and when even "tender and delicate women" were familiar with all kinds of violence and with every ghastly form of death.

The people were greatly disgusted and provoked at the slaughter of John, and although they did not rise in sedition, as perhaps Herod had apprehended, Josephus informs us that they failed not to ascribe to this enormity the destruction of his fine army by Aretas, King of Arabia (the father of the tetrarch's former wife), which soon afterwards took place.

It was not long after this that the doings of Christ first came under the notice of Herod, and perplexed him greatly: "John," he said, "have I beheaded; but who is this of whom I hear such things?" (Luke ix. 9.) This implies doubt, and, from the parallel account in Matt. xiv. 2, it would seem that he was at length led to conclude that Jesus was no other than the Baptist raised from the dead, and became very desirous to see him. Jesus probably heard of this; and, if so, we may conclude that it was from the desire to avoid the court of Herod and the snares of the tyrant, that he took ship and withdrew into the more solitary regions bordering the Lake of Tiberias. The apprehension that the people, enraged at the murder of John, and always prone to sedition, might rise into actual rebellion, and he incur the blame, may also have been one of the reasons for this step. The need of rest and refreshment after the season of excessive fatigue to which he and his Apostles, who had by this time rejoined him, had been exposed, is also mentioned as a further reason for this retirement.

The desert place to which he withdrew was not far from the town of Bethsaida. The solitude which he sought was not, however, allowed him there. The people followed him, so that even in this solitary place he was soon surrounded by a great multitude. When Jesus beheld this large body of people, so far away from their homes in the wilderness, he was moved with compassion towards them, "because they were as sheep not having a shepherd;" and he ascended an eminence with his disciples, and he taught them many things. Then perceiving that the day was far spent, and that the people were exhausted with walking and want of food, while the places were so distant where food might be procured, Jesus said to Philip, "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" This, we are told, he said to prove him, his own intentions having been already formed. But Philip had no idea of any other source of supply than the words of Jesus indicated, and the expense was the objection that rose to his mind:—"Two hundred denarii (about six pounds five shillings) worth is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little." But Andrew added, "There is a lad here who hath five barley loaves and two small fishes; but what are they among so many?" The only answer Christ made was to direct them to make the people sit down, in parties of fifty, upon the grass, which abounded in that place. This was done, and the whole number was then found to be about five thousand. Jesus then took the five loaves and two fishes, and, with his eyes cast towards heaven, he blessed this food, and broke it, delivering it as broken to the disciples, who distributed it to the people; and the supply was unexhausted until every one had received enough. Not only was there enough, there was surplus, there was abundance. For when he who could create this abundance, with just economy directed the fragments to be gathered up "that nothing might be lost," it was found that twelve baskets were required for the fragments of the loaves and fishes, which in their entire shape one basket would have contained. Each of the twelve Apostles may be supposed to have filled a basket, and probably carried down to the boat the basket he had filled.

This was in many respects the most convincing, if not in itself the greatest, miracle which Christ had yet performed. It accordingly had a corresponding effect upon the multitude, who said, "This is, of a truth, that prophet that should come into the world." Believing him to be the Messiah, they were disposed to constrain him to take the temporal sovereignty, which they conceived to belong to that character, and which he was manifestly reluctant to assume. Many have attained to thrones in this world with a less promising beginning than the adhesion of five thousand men: and if Christ had any objects of worldly ambition, an opportunity which few would have neglected was here offered to him. But far different were the objects of his coming, far different the mission to the world with which he was charged. He therefore withdrew from the crowd, alone, into the mountains, while the disciples entered their boat and pushed off for Capernaum.

As night came on, the disciples were somewhat unpleasantly circumstanced. The night was very dark; and the sea became rough, and the winds contrary. They were, besides, without their Lord, and the encouragements which his presence always brought to them. At length, in the dead of the night, they discerned dimly in the darkness an object moving towards them on the waters. Not being able to distinguish the form or features, they cried out with alarm, supposing that they beheld a spirit; but immediately they heard the well-known voice of Jesus calling to them, "It is I; be not afraid!" On hearing this, Peter, with the usual impulsiveness of his character, said, "If it be thou, bid me come to thee on the water!" Jesus said, "Come!" and he went. Doddridge and some others, in explanation of what follows, suppose that Peter could swim, and that he ventured upon the sea with some secret dependence upon his art. It is certain that when he felt himself upon the waters, with the waves high around him, his heart failed him, and as his faith departed, he began to sink. "While he believed, the sea was brass; when once he began to distrust, those waves were water." (Hall.) In this desperate case, he did the very best thing that could be done, he cried to Jesus for help—"Lord save me; I perish!" And Jesus saved him; he stretched forth his hand, and caught him saying, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" They then entered the vessel; which they had no sooner done than the wind went down. So strongly were the disciples impressed by these circumstances, that they came and worshipped him, saying, "Of a truth, thou art the Son of God!"

They came to shore in the "Land of Gennesaret," in which the town of Capernaum was situated. It was then morning, and Christ being immediately recognised, he was soon attended by the usual crowd. Wherever he went, the news of his coming went before him, and all the sick were brought out hastily in their beds and laid in the streets through which he was to pass; and they who were so happy as but to touch the hem of his garment as he went by, were immediately cured of the diseases with which they were afflicted.

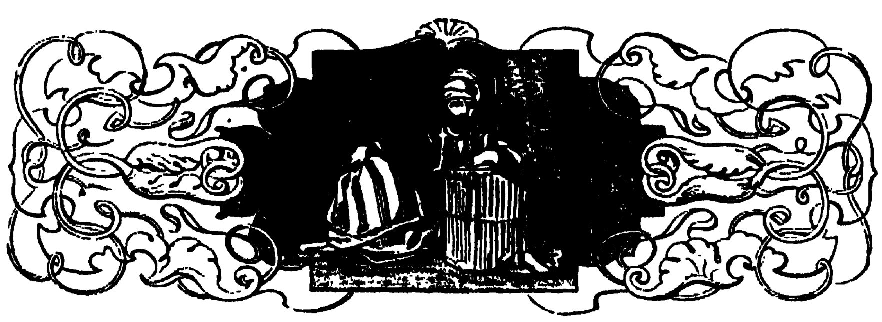
The morning after Christ had recrossed the lake, the people who had partaken of the loaves and fishes, still continuing their search for him, concluded, from the absence of the vessel in which he had arrived, that he had taken his departure.



448.—Christ Walking on the Sea.
Crist yn Rhodio ar y Môr.



449.—Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes.
Gwyrth y Torthau a'r Pysgod.



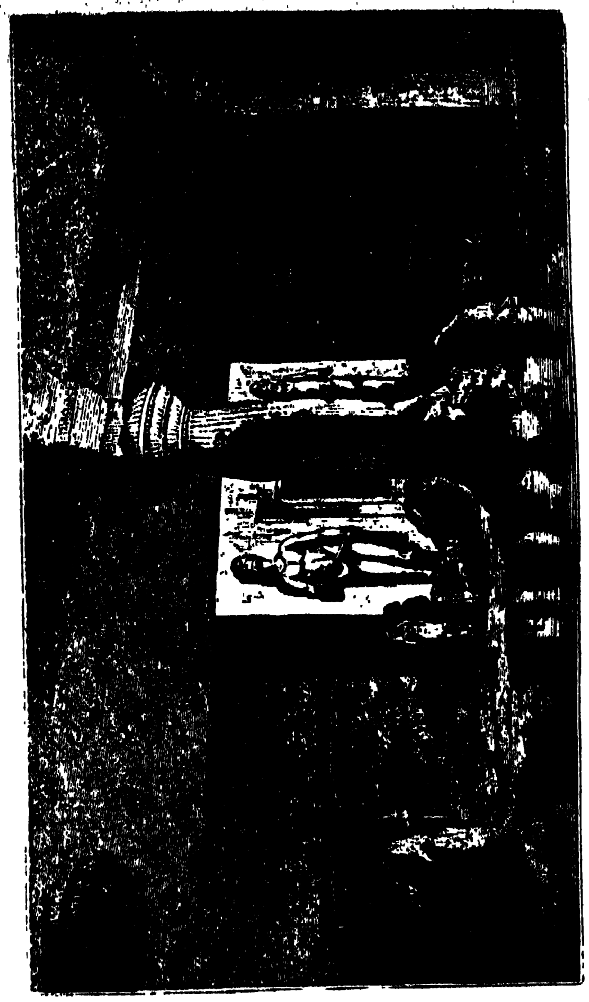
450.—Oriental Basket.
Basged Ddwyreiniol.



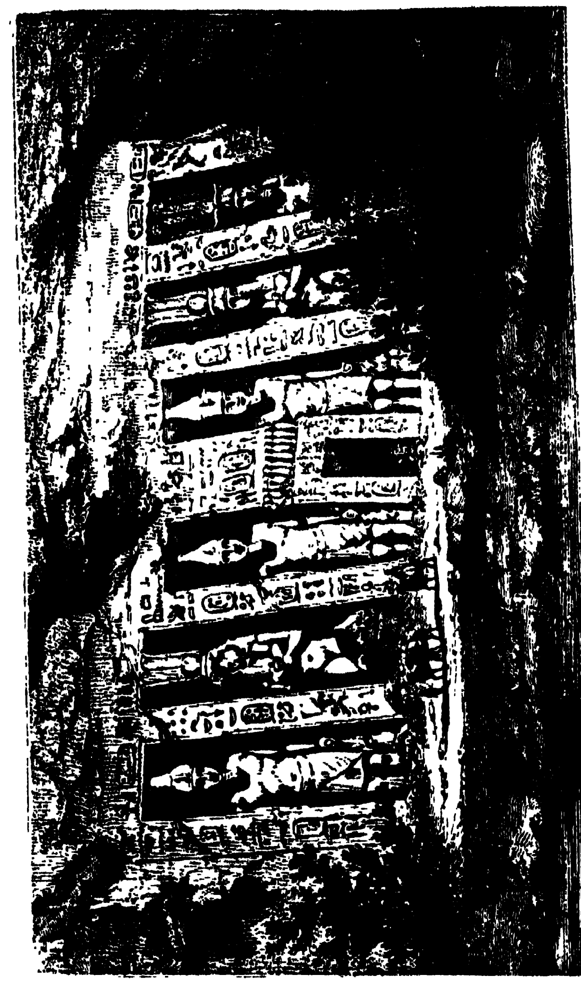
451.—Dancing Women.
Dawns-wragedd



452.- Dancing Girl.
Dawns-eneth.



453.—Cave of Elephanta.
Ogof Elephanta.



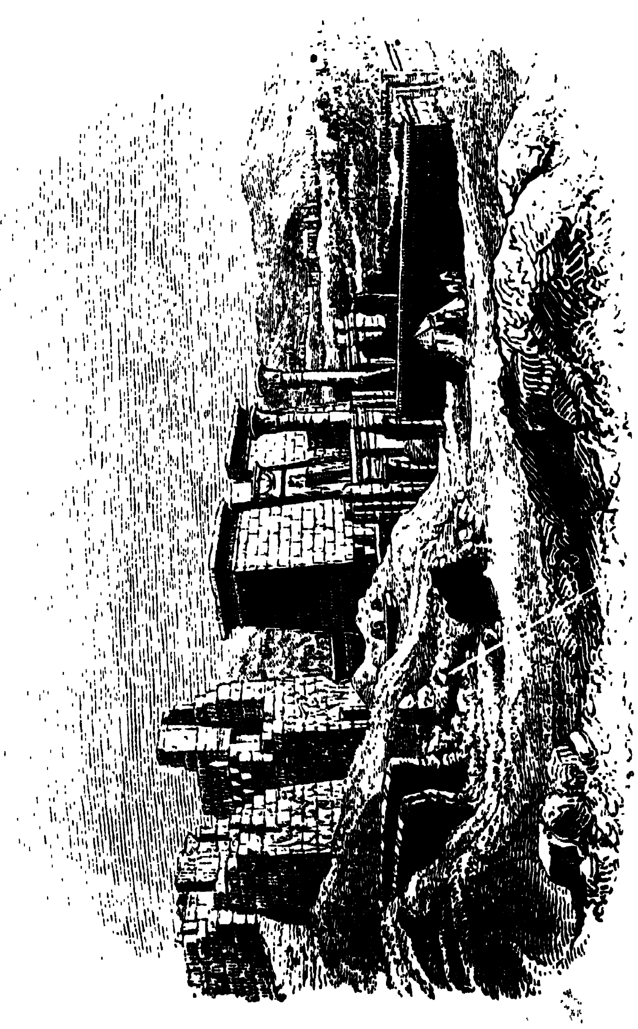
454. Rock-cut Temple of Ipsambul.
Craig-gerfiad Teml Ipsambul.



457.—Alexandria.



455.—Noph: Metrahenny.—Jer. ii.



456.—No; Thebes.—Jer. xlvi.

SUNDAY XVIII.—THE PROPHETS.

OF Egypt and its people more than usual notice is taken by the prophet Jeremiah, as might be expected from the circumstances which have been described; and several of the great and flourishing Egyptian cities of that time are named with striking predictions of their future condition. In the second chapter the prophet rebukes the Jews for their reliance upon foreign countries, especially Egypt; and asks, "What hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the water of Sihor?" Sihor is here the Nile, which is more than once in Scripture made to stand as a symbol and representative of Egypt in general. Under this idea he again asks, in xlvi. 7—

> "Who is this that cometh up like a flood,
> Whose waters are moved as the rivers?
> Egypt riseth up like a flood,
> And his waters are moved like the rivers;
> And, he saith, I will go up and cover the earth."

Here the outpouring of the Egyptian armies is, by a fine and appropriate image, compared to the inundations of the Nile.

The city most frequently mentioned by Jeremiah is Noph, which is generally, and with good reason, supposed the same with Memphis, the renowned capital of Lower Egypt. It is named in ii. 16, as one of the chief cities of Egypt—"The children of Noph and Tahapanes have broken the crown of thy head;" and in xlvi. 19, we read, "Noph shall be waste and desolate, without an inhabitant." How truly this prediction has been accomplished appears from the fact that even the site of Memphis is unknown. Some contend strongly for its being sought at Ghizeh, opposite Old Cairo; but the more general conclusion has been to fix it considerably more to the south, near the present village of Metrahenny, on the western bank of the Nile, where there are manifest indications of extensive ruins in the form of mounds, channels, and blocks of granite, many of which are covered with hieroglyphics, and are locally considered to form part of *Memf* (Memphis), the royal seat of the Pharaohs. So complete is the desolation foretold by Jeremiah, that the neighbouring village of Metrahenny is usually chosen as its pictorial representative.

This is not the case with Thebes, which is repeatedly mentioned by our prophet and others under the name of No, and No Ammon, where, although the site be forsaken, except by the greedy Arabs in their miserable huts, the ruins are still most magnificent, and so extensive that an eminent explorer of that great city is reported to have said, that all which has been explored and described of Thebes conveys no more idea of the whole of the city, than Hyde Park Corner does of the whole of London. The following notice of these two metropolitan cities in connection is partly derived from the careful note on Jer. xxvi. 19, in the 'Pictorial Bible,' as giving a clearer view of the relation between the two cities than can be found elsewhere.

Thebes and Memphis were the two most famous and magnificent cities of ancient Egypt; the latter was, like the former, the residence of mighty kings, and the capital of a great empire. From the confusion of dynasties and kingdoms, it is difficult to determine the commencement and duration of the metropolitan character in the different cities without entering into larger details than would be in this place deemed interesti[illegible] We shall therefore only premise that although Memphis was the more ancient city, yet its foundation, and still more its metropolitan rank, was posterior to that of Thebes, which it eventually superseded as the capital of Egypt. To explain this a little, it should be observed that the ancient Egyptian traditions, which are amply confirmed, state that Upper Egypt was first settled and brought under cultivation. From thence colonies proceeded into Middle and Lower Egypt, and these became the parents of other colonies, till the whole country was settled and cultivated. It appears that the separate colonies either immediately assumed or soon acquired the character of independent states or kingdoms, each with its own metropolis. But although Egypt thus contained several contemporary kingdoms, and Thebes ceased to be the sole capital of the settled country, it is evident from the nature of things, as well as from history, that it must long have remained the general capital of the whole country of Egypt. Memphis seems to have been the earliest, or one of the earliest, of those settlements below the Thebais, which became the seat of an independent kingdom. It is said to have been founded by Menes, the first Egyptian king; and the tradition that he gained its site by changing the course of the Nile, which previously ran under the Libyan mountains, is, in the opinion of Sir J. G. Wilkinson and others, strongly corroborated by the actual appearance of the river at the spot where it is alleged to have been "dyked off." The city gradually grew into importance as the metropolis of a distinct state, and, by the consolidation of several states into a single monarchy, ultimately became the sole metropolis of Egypt. The date of this event cannot be determined, but it seems quite safe to say that, first as the capital of Middle Egypt, then as the paramount metropolis of the country, and as still an important metropolitan city, after the residence of the court had been removed to Sais,—this Noph, or Memphis, was that great city of the Pharaohs with which the Hebrews were best acquainted, and to which there are the most frequent references in Scripture, by name or allusion, from the time that the Hebrew family first went down into Egypt to the days of Jeremiah. At the former date it was probably the capital of that part of Egypt with which the Hebrews were the most familiar; and at the latter it remained, in effect, the metropolis of Egypt, for although the royal court had then for some time (since the reign of Psammetichus) been held at Sais, the city of Memphis continued to be regarded as the real capital of Egypt down to the conquest of the country by the Persians; and indeed, still later, till it was superseded by Alexandria.

It has been stated that there are no such magnificent remains of Memphis as still exist of Thebes. But it has been suggested that there are points of view under which the pyramids might be regarded as belonging to Memphis. If we regard the site as marked by Metrahenny, it is centrical with regard to the pyramids, being as it were in the midst of them; and the ancient historians usually considered these wonderful structures as belonging to Memphis.

In this place it is not our intention to dwell upon the pyramids of Memphis on the one hand, or the massive temples and palaces of Thebes upon the other. We cannot, however, but point out the analogy which the latter bear to the *excavated* temples of India and Ethiopia, which seems to occur spontaneously to those who visit Thebes, after having seen the great cavern-temples of Elephanta or Ellora, or that of Ipsambul in Nubia.

"It appears probable (says Mr. Wathen, in his 'Arts and Antiquities of Egypt') that many of the peculiarities of Egyptian architecture were borrowed from large architectural excavations. Such were perhaps the earliest works in the valley of the Nile and in India. In our climate a cavern is always associated with ideas of chill, dampness, and gloom: but to those who live under the scorching sun of Egypt or India, it is known only as a delicious retreat from the heat and glare of day. There 'a great rock' is remembered as 'a shadow from the heat;' but such a shadow is shifting and transient; like Jonah's gourd, it dies away under the rising sun; when the flaming orb has reached the zenith, you are compelled to seek shelter in some retired nook. The obvious remedy for this inconvenience was to scoop out a recess in the rock by which a cool retreat would be secured throughout the day. In the East, too, the configuration of rocks and mountains offers facilities for the hollowing out habitable grottoes. Sometimes ledges of rock rise with an upright face out of the plain; sometimes a valley is shut in by perpendicular cliffs. Either would be well adapted for architectural grottoes, and the vertical face be readily hewn into an ornamental front. Such excavations were particularly suitable for sepulchres: they were applied to this purpose by almost every civilized nation of antiquity, and continued in vogue long after architecture had been established into a system. The vast tombs of Thebes are well known; and sepulchral excavations on a less magnificent scale may still be seen in Persia, Palestine, Asia Minor, and Greece: such, probably, was the cave of Machpelah, which Abraham bought to bury his dead out of his sight. Such, too, was the tomb of the Redeemer of the world."

Temples also were formed out of such excavations, as in the instances which have already been indicated; and the notion embodied in these remarks is, that the Egyptians *built* their temples in imitation of the *hewn* temples of the country from which they came. Our engravings will enable the reader to trace this analogy, which has been produced poetically, with good effect, by Mr. R. M. Milnes, in his recently published 'Palm-Leaves:'—

> "'T would seem as if some people that had held
> Their pristine seat in lands of stony hill,
> Once from their ancient boundaries outswelled
> And took these vales to conquer and to till:
> So where the memory and tradition still
> Of temples cut in living rocks remains,
> This one idea the artists' breasts might fill,
> Who built amid the Nile's alluvial plains,
> First to erect the rocks and then work out the fanes."

SUNDAY XVIII.—BIBLE HISTORY

BALAAM was very willing to have gone, for he was covetous of the gain and honour which the adventure offered. But he knew that he durst not go uncommissioned; and the commission being refused him, he was constrained reluctantly to dismiss the ambassadors with this refusal. The king of Moab, however, felt too deeply interested to abandon his object. He fancied that his offers had not been high enough to tempt the known cupidity of the prophet. He therefore sent another embassy, composed of persons of higher rank, bearing richer gifts and with promises of higher rewards. The prophet was moved. But he still replied, "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more."

Still, however, anxious to comply, he invited them to remain in his house till he should once more have inquired the will of God. In this he did wrong, for he ought at once to have been satisfied that God, who changeth not, would not allow him to curse a people whom he had so lately declared to be in the enjoyment of his blessing. Besides, his alacrity to undertake for the love of gain what would have been to an upright prophet a painful duty, was alone likely to be very displeasing to the Most High. Nevertheless, still further to try him, he was told, when he renewed his application, that he might go. Joyfully did he then quit his bed early in the morning, and saddle his ass to accompany the messengers. All went on very well for a time; but at length, on passing by a narrow way on the journey, the ass, hitherto so docile, became suddenly restive, and refused, even by the urgency of blows, to proceed any further. But as Balaam with great passion persisted in forcing the animal on, the mouth of the dumb beast was opened, and he spoke, with most miraculous organ rebuking the conduct of the prophet. At the same time, an angel standing in the way with a drawn sword, the sight of whom had prevented the ass from proceeding, became visible to Balaam, and filled him with dread. After a severe reprehension from the angel, he was allowed to complete his journey, but with a strict injunction to act and speak on his arrival only as authorized.

The king of Moab rejoiced to see him, and deemed the great object of his present policy secured by his arrival. But his gladness was somewhat damped when Balaam acquainted him with the conditions under which he had come. Afterwards the king and the prophet offered seven victims upon as many altars, and Balaam viewed the camp of the Israelites from the high places of Baal. Gladly would he have laid his curse upon them: but a mighty force was on him, and, to the great disappointment of the king, he was constrained to open his mouth in blessings. Having pacified the king by explaining the inevitable necessity under which he acted, the latter took him to a different eminence where he could only behold a portion of the camp, hoping that this part might be abandoned to his curse. But the same thing happened as before; and when the king took the prophet to yet another mountain, whence only the outskirts of the camp could be viewed, he was constrained not only to bless the Israelites, but to curse their enemies. On this the king's patience was exhausted, and he sharply commanded Balaam to depart to his own house. But again he was somewhat calmed by Balaam's reiterated declaration of his inability to say one word more or less than the Divine influence put into his mouth: and he allowed the prophet to proceed, and declare to him the things that should come to pass in the last days. He then foretold the subjugation of all the neighbouring nations to the Israelites, especially in the time of David, who is not obscurely pointed out in terms which, although they have a primary application to him, cannot be understood but with an ultimate reference to the Messiah.

Finding himself unable to accomplish the objects for which he came, Balaam prepared to return to his own country. But before he departed, he suggested to the king of Moab a plan by which he might be able to seduce the Israelites, so that they might bring a curse upon themselves, or at least become deprived of the Lord's protection, and provoke such judgments against them as those by which it was known that they had already suffered, and by which their numbers might be much reduced, and their power much weakened.

The Moabites, in conjunction with their neighbours the Midianites, immediately proceeded to carry this plan into effect. They opened apparently friendly communications with the Israelites, and employed their women to allure them into criminal intercourse. This led to still greater abominations; for the men being thus ensnared were easily persuaded to attend the idolatrous feasts, at which every kind of licentiousness was practised, and even to join in sacrifices to Baal-Peor. The extent of this degeneracy may be estimated from the fact that many persons of high station in the several tribes were the ringleaders in this transgression.

At length the divine anger broke forth against the transgressors, and this time it was not manifested through miraculous agencies, but by a judicial sentence to be executed by human hands. The word was given to slay every one who had joined himself to Baal-Peor. On this the people, conscious of their crime, humbled themselves before the Lord, with much weeping, in the hope of averting his displeasure. At this very time one Zimri, a prince of Simeon, was seen conducting a woman of Midian to his tent, in the presence of Moses and the afflicted people. On this the zeal of Phinehas, the son of the high priest, was kindled, and, obeying the impulse of the moment, he pursued them into the tent, and smote them dead with one thrust of a javelin.

Meanwhile as the sentence of slaughter had not been executed, the Lord had taken the avengement into his own hand, for a pestilence broke forth among the people. But the high act of Phinehas was accepted as an atonement, and the plague then ceased, though not until twenty four thousand men had been destroyed by it.

The Israelites were then ordered to take arms against the Midianites, who had been peculiarly active in the too successful attempt to seduce the people of God. A thousand men from each of the twelve tribes, forming a body of twelve thousand picked men, were appointed for this service, and placed under the command of Phinehas. The contest was not of long duration. The Israelites carried all before them, and they committed dreadful carnage among the Midianites, slaying without quarter all the men who came in their way. The country was not one which they were to occupy: they therefore ravaged it completely, and destroyed the towns and strongholds, with the view of disabling the Midianites from renewing the war. The booty obtained in this expedition was very considerable, and the items of the enumeration are full of suggestive matter as regards the conditions of the conquered people and the character of ancient warfare. It is thus given,—sheep six hundred and seventy-five thousand; beeves seventy-two thousand; asses sixty-one thousand; persons (females) thirty-two thousand. To this is added no less than sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty shekels' weight of gold, which had formed the ornaments of the Midianites. From the quantity and from the articles enumerated it would seem that these Midianites were well covered with "barbaric pearl and gold." The articles are named as "jewels of gold, chains, bracelets, rings, earrings, and tablets."

This abundant spoil might have suggested a nice question with respect to the distribution, as it was scarcely to be expected that the comparatively small body of men actually engaged in the expedition were to have the exclusive enjoyment of it. This, therefore, gave occasion for the law which appears to have given satisfaction to all the parties concerned, and which thenceforth regulated the practice of the Hebrews with respect to booty. The whole of the "prey," or beasts and captives, was divided into two parts, of which one went to the soldiers who had been in action, and the other to the general body of the people; so that the twelve thousand warriors had so much as five hundred and ninety thousand people. But the actual victors seem to have had the entire of the personal "spoil" at their disposal, and in this instance they presented it as an oblation to the tabernacle. From the "prey," or live stock, a tribute for the Lord was also levied, being at the rate of one in fifty from the share of the warriors, and one in five hundred from the share of the people. It may be remarked that the distribution of one-half to the general body of the people arose from all the adult males in the camp being regarded as forming an army, composed of men fit to bear arms, and liable at any time to be called into the field; and of whom, therefore, the body at any time engaged in actual service was merely a detachment.

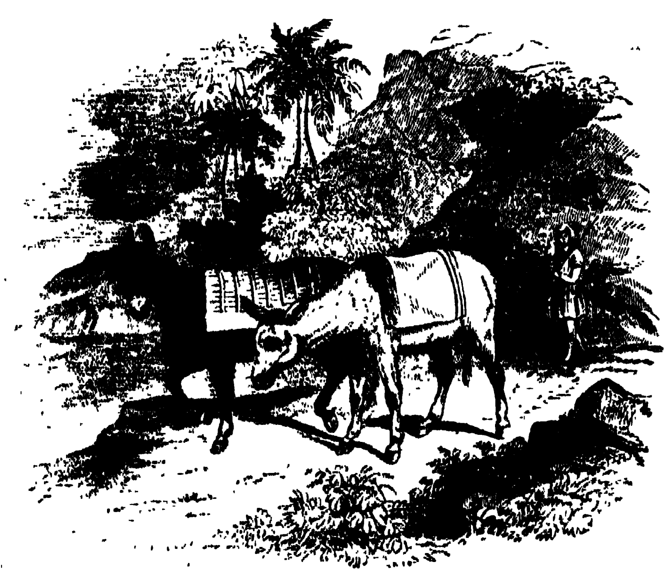
As the time was at hand in which the Israelites were to take possession of their long-promised heritage, Moses was commanded to take the number of the people. They had before been numbered, before quitting Sinai, and it was then found that there were 603,550 males in the twelve tribes above the age of twenty years; on the present occasion the number was found to be 601,730, being a decrease upon the whole of 1820. But this does not include the tribe of Levi, which numbered 23,000, being an increase of 727,



458.—Balaam. (Northcote.)—Num. xxii.



461.—Purification of the Soldier and his Spoil. (Melville).—Num. xxxi.
Puredigaeth y Milwr a'i Ysbail.



459.—Egyptian Asses, Saddled (ancient).
Asynod Aiphtaidd, wedi eu cyfrwyo (hynafol).



460.—Jericho.



462.—Eagle and Nest.
Eryr a Nyth.



464.—Ear-rings of Men.
Clust-dlysau Meibion.



463.—Jewels of Gold and Jewels of Silver. (Composed from Egyptian Drawings and Sculptures in the British Museum.)—Exod. xii. 35.
Tlysau Aur a Thlysau Arian. (Wedi eu cyfansoddi oddi wrth Luniau a Cherfluniau yn yr Amgueddfa Brydeinig.)



465.—Moses beholding the Promised Land. (B. West.)
Moses yn gweled Gwlad yr Addewid.

which reduces the total decrease to 1093. The following table will show the numbers in the several tribes, and the increase and decrease in each of them :—

	CHAP. I.	CHAP. XXVI.	INCREASE.	DECREASE.
Reuben	46,500	43,730	——	2,770
Simeon	59,300	22,200	——	37,100
Gad	45,650	40,500	——	5,150
Judah	74,600	76,500	1,900	——
Issachar	54,400	64,300	9,900	——
Zebulun	57,400	60,500	3,100	——
Ephraim	40,500	32,500	——	8,000
Manasseh	32,200	52,700	20,500	——
Benjamin	35,400	45,600	10,200	——
Dan	62,700	64,400	1,700	——
Asher	41,500	53,400	11,900	——
Naphtali	53,400	45,400	——	8,000
	603,550	601,730	59,200	61,020
			Decrease on the whole	1,820
Levites from a month old	22,273	23,000	727	——

As the adult males usually form about one-fourth of the entire population, the entire number of the Israelites, including the tribe of Levi, may be estimated at 2,500,000. Not only the tribes, but the several families of Israel, were at this time registered under the names of those sons or grandsons of the patriarchs who were the progenitors of the grand subdivisions in the several tribes. And it was directed that the division of the land in Canaan should be made according to the register thus formed. The quantity of the land was to be proportioned to the numbers of each tribe, and of each family in each tribe; and the situation of the portions both of the tribes and families was to be determined by lot. This was eventually done in the manner which we shall have occasion to describe.

As Moses was not to enter the Promised Land, it became evident that his days were soon to close. In preparation of that solemn event the prophet was commanded to appoint Joshua, the son of Nun, who has so often been mentioned in the history, to the high task of introducing the chosen people into their promised heritage. He was not the successor of the legislator: Moses had no successor; neither had Joshua himself any when he died. They were both raised up for particular and extraordinary services of an entirely different nature—Moses, to deliver Israel from Egypt, and to organize the people so delivered: Joshua, who was endued with much valour and high military talents, to lead the people in those wars which were to give them possession of the land promised to their fathers.

About this time the tribes of Reuben and Gad solicited Moses for permission to take for their share of territory the lands which had been conquered from Sihon and Og, east of the Jordan. The ground of their application was, that the land was peculiarly suited for pasturage, and they had large possessions of flocks and herds. Moses was not at first pleased at this application, construing it into a desire to provide for themselves on easy terms, by taking possession of what all the tribes had conquered, without assisting the other tribes in the warfare for their possessions. But the applicants explained, with much earnestness, that this was far from their wish. If their suit were granted, they would leave their families and substance in the land, but would themselves accompany the main body of the Israelites across the river, and remain in arms until they also had received their heritage. To the proposal, when stated in this shape, Moses assented; but as the territory appeared too large for two tribes, he added half the tribe of Manasseh, to which was given the northernmost portion of this fine territory. It is probable that the extraordinary increase of Manasseh, which the recent census had made apparent, suggested the selection of this tribe, and the separation in it which accordingly took place.

After this Moses assembled the whole congregation of Israel, and addressed them for the last time. He recapitulated all the remarkable events which had transpired from the departure of their fathers out of Egypt to the present time. He assured them of the Divine assistance in the conquest of Canaan, and cautioned them against unbelief and distrust of the Divine word. To strengthen this caution he reminded them of the former disobedience and frequent rebellions of their fathers, in consequence of which they had been doomed to wander forty years in the wilderness, and denied admission to the Promised Land. He then reminded them of their signal successes over the Amorites, whom they had attacked with the Divine permission, and assured them that Joshua was divinely appointed to put them in possession of the land of their inheritance.

Moses then proceeeded to refresh the knowledge of the new generation by repeating, with some alterations which the lapse of time and the approaching change of life made necessary, the various civil laws and ordinances which had from time to time been delivered to him. With reference to these he emphatically remarked:—"Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep, therefore, and do them; for this is your wisdom and understanding in the sight of the nations. And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law which I set before you this day? Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but teach them to thy sons and to thy sons' sons" (Deut. iv. 5—10).

When Moses had finished the recapitulation of the laws and statutes of Jehovah, he proceeded to set before the people the abundant blessings which should attend their obedience, and the dreadful punishments which awaited their disobedience. These punishments were such that "Even all nations shall say, wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? What meaneth the heat of his great anger? Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt." How truly and sadly the doom denounced against their disobedience was accomplished, will in the ensuing pages appear too plainly.

Moses now wrote all the words of the law in a book. This is the first mention of a book which occurs in the Scriptures; and the information which we possess concerning ancient books leaves no question but that it was of skins made up into rolls. We are not, however, to conclude that the skins were prepared into parchment, as that was an invention of much later date, later than even the papyrus, several interesting rolls of which are preserved in collections of Egyptian antiquities. Those who have been privileged to see Mr. Catlin's Indian Museum, and have noticed the white skin robes prepared by the rude Indians from the hide of the bison, will have no difficulty in understanding how skins might be made fit for writing on, even before the invention of parchment.

Moses then gave forth a magnificent poem, called in after time "the song of Moses," in which the Divine care over the people is celebrated by many interesting circumstances and striking images, such as that of the eagle caring for its young:—

> "The Lord's portion is his people:
> Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.
> He found him in a desert land,
> And in the waste howling wilderness;
> He led him about, he instructed him,
> He kept him as the apple of his eye:
> As an eagle stirreth up her nest
> And fluttereth over her young,
> Or spreadeth around her wings, and taketh them up
> And beareth them on her wings:
> So the Lord alone did lead him."

Finally, Moses bestowed upon the tribes his last and solemn blessing, similar in many respects to that which Jacob had in his last days bestowed upon his sons. The prophet then received the Divine command to ascend to the summit of Mount Nebo, and survey from thence the Promised Land before he closed his eyes in death. This summons he had long expected, and he obeyed it without demur, knowing that the appointed hour was come. He ascended from the plains of Moab, and upon Mount Nebo delivered up the charge he had received upon Mount Sinai. He died at the age of one hundred and twenty years, when "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated."

The Israelites mourned thirty days for their great leader, and then took immediate measures with reference to the high enterprise which lay before them. The first act of Joshua, who now took the chief place as military leader, was to send two spies across the river. It was evident that the great city of Jericho, which lay before them in the plain west of the Jordan, must become the first object of the operations of the Hebrew host; and the spies were therefore directed to make their way into the town and obtain information respecting the strength of the place and the disposition of the inhabitants. They succeeded in gaining an entrance into the city; but they had scarcely arrived before the king received intelligence of it, and sent to apprehend them in a house near the wall, belonging to a woman named Rahab, in which they had taken up their abode. But the hostess, having timely notice of this, concealed the spies under some flax which had been spread out to dry upon the flat roof of her house.

SUNDAY XVIII.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

IN this, so many of them as could find boats to convey them over, hastened across the lake afer him. When they had found him at Capernaum, they asked, "Rabbi, when camest thou hither?" which he answered by reprehending them, as now seeking him, only because they had been, through him, satiated with food for the body, and were now in hopes that he would exhibit new miracles for their external benefit. Then, taking advantage of the state of consciousness which this accusation had produced, he proceeded to urge upon them the obligation of seeking that spiritual nourishment, "the bread of life," which he only could bestow. The important discourse in which this view was enforced is continued in the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel; and it is remarkable, beyond many other parts of the sacred narrative, for the marked effect produced on the hearers, who frequently interposed their objections and remarks, and who were so much offended at some of our Lord's sayings on this occasion, that many, even of the disciples, who had hitherto followed Jesus, left him and departed to their own homes. The chosen twelve, however, remained steady. When Christ pointedly asked them, "Will ye also go away?" Peter in the name of the rest answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the son of the living God."

It was now the time of the Passover, being the third Passover since the baptism of Jesus. But this year he did not go up to Jerusalem, knowing that the Jews of Judea only sought an occasion to put him to death. He, therefore, remained in Galilee with his disciples. He was not, however, allowed to carry on his proceedings unquestioned in Galilee, for certain adepts in the law came to him from Jerusalem after the Passover, hoping to confound him with their objections; but they were only confounded by the attempt.

Soon after Jesus proceeded to that part of Phœnicia dependent upon Tyre and Sidon, which, as well as all the rest of Syria, was now under the dominion of the Romans. Here the inhabitants were chiefly Gentiles; but many Jews were settled among them, and they were, for Gentiles, unusually well acequainted with the Jews, and with their religion and habits of life. As it was not the object of Jesus to preach to the Gentiles, and he must have come hither chiefly for privacy, and to keep himself out of Herod's jurisdiction without going to Judea, he desired his disciples not to make him known. But "he could not be hid." The arrival in those parts of the famous Jewish prophet soon became known. One of the first to avail herself of his presence was a woman of the country, "whose daughter had an unclean spirit." This woman cast herself at his feet, beseeching him to heal her daughter. But he answered not a word. This might have discouraged a less earnest and less believing soul. But she would not be refused. A mother's love urged her on. She followed crying, "Have mercy on *me!*" although it was not for herself, but for her daughter, that she besought him: but in that daughter all the affections of her forlorn heart were garnered up, and, therefore, she implored mercy as for herself. Still Jesus heeded not; but the disciples, distressed by her importunity, came to him, and begged him to send her away by a favourable answer. But he answered, alluding to the relation in which the covenant people stood to the rest of the world:—"It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to the dogs." Overhearing this, the woman returned the exceedingly neat reply—"Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table." Jesus was moved at this, and answered, "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." The sacred historian adds, "And her daughter was made whole from that very hour."

Returning from Phœnicia towards the Sea of Galilee, a young man deprived of hearing and speech was brought to him to be cured. From the circumstance that he spoke as soon as his tongue was loosened, which if deaf and dumb from birth he could not have done without a distinct miracle, greater than even that of the cure, it is supposed that the youth had become deaf and dumb by disease or accident. Beholding him with pity, our Lord took him aside, from the gathering crowd; and then, touching the man's tongue, and putting his fingers into his ears, he raised his eyes to heaven in the act of mental prayer, and said "be opened." At that word the string which had so long held the tongue in bondage was severed, and the ears, dead so long, became at once sensible of the repercussion of each joyful sound upon them. He heard distinctly and spoke plainly. And the Lord then returned him to his rejoicing friends, who, although enjoined silence, could not control their gladness, but proclaimed the matter everywhere, saying, "He hath done all things well; he maketh the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak."

Some commentators remark that in the previous miracle Jesus, by curing an idolatrous woman, and in this by curing one who, as being deaf and dumb, was an atheist, knowing nothing of any religion, showed he was the Saviour of the whole human race: this assumes that the youth had been born deaf and dumb; and, even so, this may be a mistake, for do we not thus limit the grace of God, which can find entrance to the soul of man when all the ordinary avenues of human intercourse are shut up in silence or in darkness? When the Hon. Mrs. Dawson Damer was travelling in Palestine, she was attended by a deaf and dumb guide; and on occasion of an accident which befel her daughter, and might have been attended with dangerous consequences, his manner touched the lady much. "He looked earnestly at me and then pointed towards heaven, as if to direct my gratitude thither. As Syria is not likely to have produced an Abbé de l'Epée, this poor man's sense of religion must have been innate, and its impression was the more pure and remarkable; no Christian of our party would thus have immediately referred to a superintending Providence: I had observed it on another occasion; on dividing some bread with him, he first kissed it, and then looked upward most devoutly."

The people who had gathered around him at this time were so drawn on by their wonder at the miracles of mercy which they were constantly witnessing, that they followed about for three successive days. They became so much exhausted, that the benevolent Saviour was unwilling to dismiss them to their homes without food, "lest they should faint by the way." The recent miracle was therefore repeated. The whole multitude, numbering four thousand persons, was fed from seven loaves and a few small fishes, the gathered fragments of which filled seven baskets.

Immediately after this our Lord and his disciples took ship upon the Lake of Tiberias, to the coasts of Magdala and Dalmanatha. On the passage the disciples were much concerned at discovering that they had neglected to bring with them a supply of bread. Christ at the same time began to caution them to beware of the "leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees." This was levelled at the hypocritical professions and self-exalting doctrines of these classes. But the disciples, with their minds preoccupied with the want of bread, fancied that this discourse was aimed at their neglect. Jesus discerned this, and reproved them for their anxiety in this matter by reminding them of the recent miracles by which thousands had been abundantly fed.

They landed at Bethsaida, and, after curing a blind man at that place, proceeded to Cæsarea Philippi, which was out of Herod's jurisdiction, and in that of his brother Philip. Here Jesus began to question the disciples respecting the opinions which they had heard of him. He was answered that some supposed that he was John the Baptist; some Elias; others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. "But whom," asked Jesus, "say *ye* that I am?" Peter, as usual, speaking for the rest, answered this important question by repeating the declaration which he had made on a former occasion: "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God." This called forth from Jesus the memorable words—"Blessed art thou, Simon Bar Jona [son of Jona]; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say unto thee that thou art PETER [a rock, in Hebrew CEPHAS], and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Without entering into the interpretations which have been given to this charge to Peter, it is important to mark out distinctly the important and formal declaration which preceded it, and is connected with it; because from that time our Lord began to speak openly of the mode in and by which the great objects of his coming were to be accomplished, namely, by his death on the cross, to be followed by his resurrection from the dead.

Much had already occurred to prepare the disciples for this; but having as yet no clear notion of our Lord's spiritual kingdom upon earth, they were much distressed at this declaration.



466. Miracle of Curing the Deaf.—Mark vii.
Gwyrth Iachad y Byddar



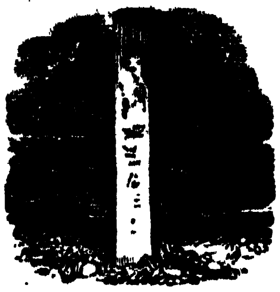
467.—Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes.—Mark vi.
Gwyrth y Torthau a'r Pysgon.



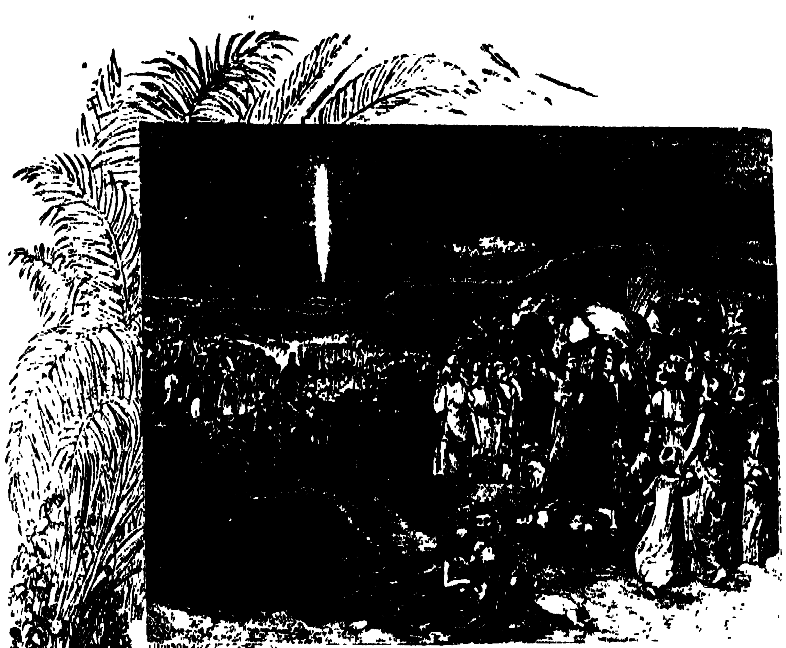
468. Parable of the Blind leading the Blind. (After Tintoretto.)—Matt. xv.
Dammeg y Dall yn tywys y Dall. (Yn ol Tintoretto.)

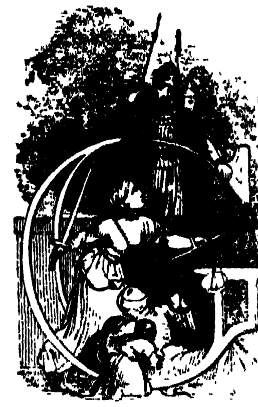


469.—Christ delivering the Keys to St. Peter. (Raffaelle.)
Crist yn rhoddi yr Agoriadau i St. Petr.



474.—Psalm lxxvi





477.—Psalm lxxxii



478.—Psalm lxxxiii



470.—Psalm lxxv.

NTO thee, O God, do we give thanks.—1.

God is the Judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.—8.

Psalm lxxvii.

Thou leddest thy people like sheep by the hands of Moses and Aaron.—20.



476.—Psalm lxxxi.



479.—Psalm lxxxiv



472.—Psalm lxxvii



480.—Psalm lxxxv.

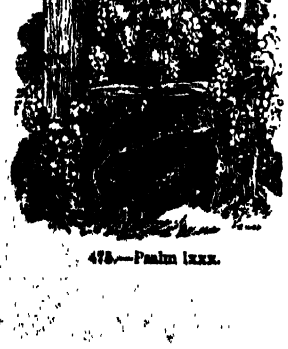




471.—Psalm lxxix.

GOD, the heathens are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled, and made Jerusalem an heap of stones.—1.

The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the air; and the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the land.—2.



475.—Psalm lxxx.



473.—Psalm lxxviii.

SUNDAY XIX.—THE PSALMS.

INSCRIPTIONS OF THE PSALMS.

TO all the Psalms, with the exception of thirty-four, titles or inscriptions are prefixed. Those which are without titles the Talmud calls Orphan Psalms. The titles either designate their authors, or the superintendents of their music, or their subjects, or their historical occasions, or their style of poetry, or their style of music. The genuineness of these titles is a matter of doubt. By many they are all unconditionally rejected as spurious, by others only in part. A comparison of the arguments in favour of their genuineness with those on the other side of the question, seems to show that the preponderance lies with the latter. The following view of these arguments is drawn chiefly from De Wette's 'Commentar über die Psalmen.'

In favour of the titles it may be alleged:

1. That they are very ancient. The Seventy found them as they now are. But in the time of the Seventy these titles were already unintelligible, for the translations which they have given are often destitute of meaning: they must, therefore, have had their origin at a period so early, that the tradition of their sense was now entirely lost. If, however, it were believed, as it is by many, that the Seventy translators were Egyptian Jews, it might be alleged that their remoteness from Jerusalem, and their separation from the temple service of Palestine, prevented them from becoming acquainted with devotional music and other matters of that sort, and they failed on that account to understand the titles. At any rate, the argument from ignorance of the Seventy is carried too far; if it leads us to fix the origin of the titles at an earlier period than that of Ezra.

2. It is customary with the poets of the East to prefix their names to their own songs. And to show that this custom prevailed among the Hebrews, some writers point to Exod. xv., Deut. xxii., xxiii., Judg. v.; but although the poets are there named, it is only in connection with the narrative, and not, as among the Arabians, in a proper title. Hence, no evidence of the existence of the custom is to be derived from these passages. It may be allowed, however, that Isa. xxxviii. 9, and the custom of designating the predictions of the prophets by their names, are in favour of it.

3. Many of the titles accord very well with the subject matter. The number of those, however, which do not thus accord, is greater.

4. If the titles were annexed by later hands, perhaps from mere conjecture, why were not all the Psalms provided with them? The circumstance that many of the Psalms have come down to us without them, is a proof that nothing was given but what was found already existing. The argument drawn from this circumstance to prove the genuineness of the titles, possesses as little force as the argument which may be drawn from the same quarter to prove their spuriousness. On many of the Psalms the authors of the titles had no conjectures to give.

On the other hand it has been alleged, without ground, against the genuineness of the titles, that they are found wanting or varied in many of the ancient versions—for instance, the Septuagint, the Syriac, and the Arabic. The Septuagint originally translated them with the rest, as the manuscripts, as well as the citations of the oldest fathers, prove. Hence they certainly lay also before the still later Syrian translator, and the intervening Arabian possesses no authority. Besides, the omission of many of the titles in the versions above mentioned is merely a defect of particular manuscripts. That the translators, especially the Syrian, occasionally have other titles and larger ones than the Hebrew text, is, to be sure, a most remarkable circumstance; but it may be accounted for by supposing that whenever the titles were wanting in the original, or were left out in the translation, either by accident or the fault of the transcriber, or with the intention of the translator who could not undertake to translate what was unintelligible (as we may venture to believe the Syrian translator would not). A decisive argument against the genuineness of the titles is the fact that they often prove to be incorrect. Sometimes the author is incorrectly specified (as when several Psalms are ascribed to David, and to Asaph, which undeniably belong to later authors), sometimes the occasion. Proof of this may be deduced from the titles as compared with the contents of Psalms xxxiv., li., liv., lvi., lvii., lix., lx. Many of these titles are taken from the historical books, from which they are sometimes literally transcribed. Why Psalm lvi. should be referred to 1 Sam. xxi 11; and Psalm lvii. to 1 Sam. xxii., is not very apparent from their respective subjects; the author of these titles seems to have blindly followed the course of the narrative in the First Book of Samuel. But if several of the titles may be proved to be false, who will answer for the genuineness of the rest? This circumstance exposes them all to the suspicion of being spurious.

Most writers and expositors take a middle course, and suppose that there have been additions to the ancient genuine titles of others, which are more recent and false, by means of marginal glosses and interpolations. Rosenmuller and Sark regard the titles relating to music as being without exception of late origin. Gesenius holds that the spurious titles sprung from the particular collections which *a parte potiori* have the name of Psalms of David, Psalms of the children of Korah, &c., but contained also other Psalms. When they were incorporated in the great collection, each song was ascribed to the author after whom the whole collection was named, just as in the Chronicles and in the New Testament the anonymous Psalms are ascribed to David.

The view of the subject which has here been taken does not materially differ from that of the Rev. T. H. Horne, whose authority may be adduced to sanction the conclusions to which it leads. "That all the titles of the Psalms are canonical and inspired we have no authority to affirm. Augustine, Hilary, Theodoret, Cassiodorus, and many other ancient fathers, admit that they have no relation to the body of the Psalms, and that they contribute nothing to the sense. The Septuagint and other Greek versions have added titles to some of the Psalms which have none in the Hebrew: the Protestant and Romish churches have determined nothing concerning them. If the titles of the Psalms had been esteemed canonical, would it have been permitted to alter them, to suppress them, or to add to them? Which of the commentators, Jewish or Christian, Catholic or Protestant, thinks it incumbent upon him to follow the title of the Psalm in his Commentary? And yet both Jews and Christians receive the book of Psalms as an integral part of Holy Writ. Although, therefore, many of the titles prefixed to the Psalms are of very questionable authority, as not being extant in Hebrew manuscripts, and some of them are undoubtedly not of equal antiquity with the text, being in all probability conjectural additions made by the collector of the Psalms at different periods, who undertook to supply the deficiency of titles from their own judgment or fancy, without a due regard to manuscripts, yet we have no reason to suppose that very many of them are not canonical parts of the Psalms; because they are perfectly in unison with the Oriental manner of giving titles to books and poems."

Admitting the correctness of this, the difficulty begins when we attempt to distinguish the spurious from the genuine. A few of the former are to be detected by want of agreement with the text; but by what rule shall the others be recognised? And while they remain undistinguished, no stress can be laid upon the titles prefixed to any of the Psalms.

We shall now proceed to give the best explanations of the several titles which can now be obtained. As they stand in our version they are to most readers unintelligible, and matters of vague speculation; and such will feel it an advantage to be able to connect some definite ideas with them. We shall put them in alphabetical order.

AIJELETH SHAHAR Psalm xxii. This phrase means, literally, "Hind of the Morning;" and is supposed either to designate the matter of the Psalm, or to be an indication of time, or the name of a musical instrument, or the title of some other song to the melody of which this Psalm was sung. The last opinion seems by far the most probable. Possibly the expression denotes the sun, to which the Arabian poets give the name of Gazelle. As for the rest, it is not necessary to suppose that the words formed the commencement of a song. If only the first and principal thing mentioned in a song were a "hind of the morning," it would be sufficient to designate the piece. An example of this may be seen in David's elegy upon Jonathan, which is called the "Song of the Bow," simply because it contains the mention of a bow. The same custom still exists among the Arabians.

SUNDAY XIX.—BIBLE HISTORY.

WHEN the men in search of them came, Rahab by her answers led them to conclude that the strangers had already taken their departure, and that she was herself very solicitous for their apprehension. Having thus succeeded in putting them on a wrong scent, she felt that the spies were no longer safe in her house. She therefore went to them on the housetop, and declaring her belief that the place would be taken by their countrymen, she requested them to promise that, in return for the service which she had rendered, the lives of herself and her near kindred should be spared. The men, believing that Joshua would sanction their engagement, gave the required promise, and directed her to attach a scarlet line to her window, in order that, during the assault upon the town, her house might be distinguished from all others, and its inmates spared. In stating the grounds of her belief in their success, Rahab incidentally gave the spies much valuable information, which enables us to perceive the state of mind in which the nearer Canaanites awaited the invasion of the Hebrews.

It seems that the fame of the miracles which the Lord had wrought in Egypt on the behalf of his people, and the wonders of the Wilderness, as well as the victories on the east of the river, had attracted much attention in Canaan, and had filled the inhabitants with such alarm and discouragement as accounts well for their not assembling to oppose the Hebrew host at the Jordan, across which it was now manifest that they intended to enter the country. Having given this information, Rahab assisted them in leaving Jericho unobserved, by lowering them down by a rope through the window: and on their return they gave Joshua an account of their mission.

On the very day after receiving this encouraging intelligence, Joshua took measures for the removal of the camp to the other side of the river. It was then the time of flood, when the river was full, deep, and rapid, and therefore presented a greater obstacle to the passage than at any other time of the year. But this seemed no great hinderance to those who had seen the Red Sea itself separate to afford a passage to the descendants of Abraham. Indeed, it was promised that the waters of the Jordan should in like manner be divided to afford them a dryshod entrance to their heritage. Pursuant to the directions which accompanied this promise, the ark, borne by the priests, went about three-fourths of a mile in advance of the great body of the host. No sooner had the feet of these sacred persons touched the river's brink, than the waters divided to give them passage. The waters below the point went on emptying themselves into the Dead Sea, while the stream above was arrested in its impetuous course, leaving the channel dry from the point where the priests entered to the head of the lake. The priests went on, and when they reached the middle of the river's bed they rested there, beneath the shadow of the wall of waters, the ark of God being thus interposed between the impending flood and the people, who, as soon as they came up, passed across between the ark and the head of the lake. When all had gone over, the priests took up the ark and went up out of the bed of the river; and no sooner had their feet quitted the channel, than the mighty hand which held back the flood was withdrawn, and the accumulated waters rushed onward to the sea.

Before the priests quitted the bed of the Jordan a singular operation was performed, which, taken in connection with other circumstances, reminds one strongly of the Druidical monuments and stones of memorial which are found in different parts of the world. Twelve men, one from every tribe, were sent back into the bed of the river, each bearing a large stone, which he deposited there, and returned with a large stone from the river. The stones thus obtained were set up as stones of memorial at Gilgal, where the Israelites formed their first encampment in the land of Canaan.

This miraculous passage of the river must have much heightened the consternation of the Canaanites; and the manner in which the Israelites obtained possession of Jericho was well framed to strengthen this feeling in them, as well as to give confidence to the Israelites, from the conviction that a Divine power would be exerted to put them in possession of those strong cities, the report of whose high walls and towers had filled their fathers with alarm.

As soon as the Israelites had crossed the river, the miraculous supply of manna, which they had hitherto enjoyed, ceased, and they from that time ate bread made from the corn of the land. In the wilderness the rite of circumcision had been neglected, and the Passover had not been observed. But before commencing their operations in Palestine, it was deemed right that the people should be circumcised in their camp at Gilgal; and they then proceeded to celebrate the Passover, the time for which had arrived.

After this, as Joshua was out alone reconnoitring the town of Jericho, which he had placed under siege, he was surprised by the sudden appearance of a personage with a drawn sword, who announced himself as the heavenly "captain of the Lord's host," and proceeded to give to the prostrate Joshua instructions for the siege of the city. He was directed to "compass the city by all the men of war, and go round about it once; and do this six days." "And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass that when they make a long blast with the rams' horns, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people ascend every man straight before him." This course was exactly followed. The procession, however imposing, must have seemed an idle show during six days; but on the seventh, when the wall fell down at the great shout which arose from that mighty host, and while the earth yet shook with that terrible downfall, the Israelites rushed into the now open city, which they sacked and utterly destroyed. No living creature was spared (save Rahab and her friends), and the buildings were destroyed by fire; but the silver and gold, and the vessels of brass and iron, were brought into the treasury of the Lord. In fact the town had at the first been laid under a solemn ban, or curse of devotement, which made it a high crime for any one to save for himself any of the things doomed to be destroyed, or of those which were to be saved only for the use of the sanctuary.

The next attack of the Israelites was against the town of Ai; and they made it in all the confidence of victory which the miraculous overthrow of Jericho inspired. But they were repulsed, and fled before the men of Ai, who sallied out against them. This was a terrible disaster, not merely from the discouragement of the Israelites, but far more from the enemy being thus enabled to perceive that the dreaded invaders were not after all invincible. It was evident from this that the Lord had, for some unknown reason, abandoned them to their own resources. A solemn inquiry was then instituted, and it was discovered that one of the men engaged in the sack of Jericho had been tempted to appropriate to his own use from the devoted spoils a "goodly Babylonish garment," together with some silver, and an ingot of gold.

By this act the man, whose name was Achan, had involved the whole of the host in the infraction of a solemn covenant, which had led to the disaster at Ai. The devoted articles were taken from him and laid up before the Lord: Achan and his family were stoned, and afterwards burned; and by this expiation "the fierceness of the Lord's anger was turned from Israel." After this a second expedition against Ai was undertaken; and this time the Israelites were more successful. The city was taken and burnt, and all the inhabitants put to the sword; but the spoil, consisting of cattle and large quantities of gold and silver, was this time divided among the people.

When the Gibeonites, a people of Canaan inhabiting this neighbourhood, heard of the destruction of Jericho and Ai, with the slaughter of the inhabitants, and that the Israelites were under a command to destroy all the nations of the land without entering into any league with them or giving them any quarter, they resolved to obtain exemption by means of a stratagem. With this view they sent some of their principal men as ambassadors, who were fitted out in such a manner that they seemed to have come from a very distant country; making it appear that the provisions which they carried were either exhausted or spoiled by the length of the journey, and even their clothes and wine-skins worn out. These persons presented themselves before Joshua and the elders of Israel; and stated that their distant countrymen had heard of the mighty deeds which God had brought for his people in rescuing them from Egypt, and in destroying before them the powerful kings of the Amorites: and these reports had so impressed their minds, as to render them highly desirous of the friendship of a people thus highly favoured by heaven. For this purpose they had undertaken a long and fatiguing journey, as their nation was even willing to become their tributaries, if they might have security that they should not at any future period be destroyed by the increasing power and dominion of Israel. Joshua and the elders hastily deemed the condition in which these men appeared, and the state of their provisions, as sufficient evidence for the truth of



481.—The Oath of Ahab and the Spies. (Agostino Carracci.)—Josh. ii.
Llw Rahab a'r Ysbiwyr.



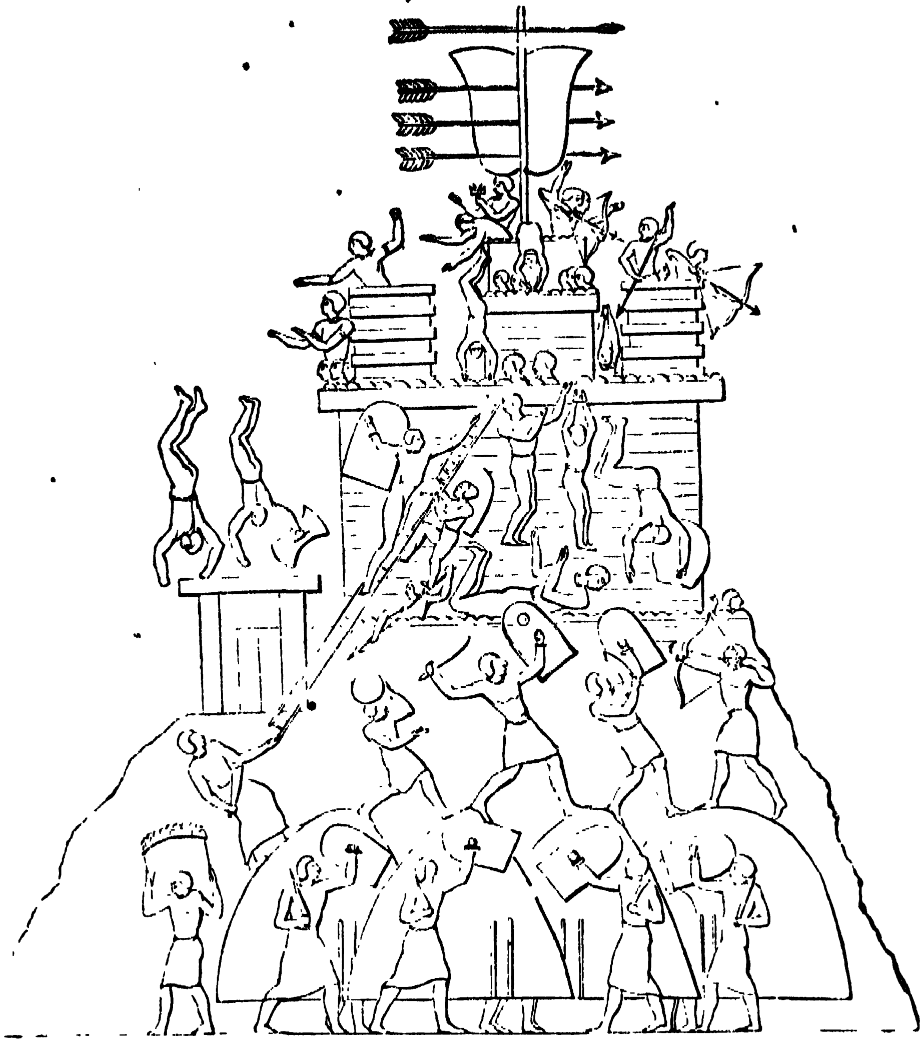
482.—Joshua and the Angel. (Agostino Carracci.)—Josh. v.
Josua a'r Angel.



483.—Conviction of Achan. (Agostino Carracci.)—Josh. vii.
Dal Achan.



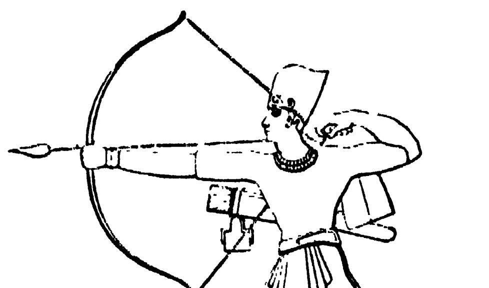
484.—Craft of the Gibeonites. (Adapted from Agostino Carracci.)—Josh. ix.
Twyll y Gibeoniaid. (A drefnwyd o Agostino Carracci.)



487.—An Egyptian Siege. (From an existing Bas-relief.)
Gwarchau Aiphtaidd. (O safiun sydd ar gael.)



485.—Water-Carrier.
Gwenydd Dwfr.



488.—Treading the Conquered under Feet.
Sathru'r Gorchfygedig dan draed.



489.—Eastern Housetops.
Nenau Tai Dwyreiniol



490.—Eastern Housetops.
Nenau Tai Dwyreiniol.



486.—Water-Carriers.
Gwehynwyr Dwfr.

this plausible tale: and they entered into a league with them, engaging by a solemn oath not to destroy, but to protect, the people they represented. The deception practised by the Gibeonites was, however, soon after discovered. But in consideration of the solemn engagement into which the Israelites had entered, their lives were spared; but their lands and cities were taken under the dominion of Israel, and the inhabitants had imposed upon them the service of providing wood and water for the use of the tabernacle—that is, they had to carry the water in their skin bags, and to cut and carry the wood for the sacrifices. This was a great relief to those by whom these servile labours had hitherto been performed. It would appear that the Gibeonites generally pursued their ordinary modes of life, and had only to provide a sufficient number of men, whether in rotation or by substitute, to be "hewers of wood and drawers of water."

The exclusive alliance of the Gibeonites with the Israelites was highly displeasing to the neighbouring states, and in particular to Adoni-zedek, the king of Jerusalem, who formed a confederacy with four other kings of the small neighbouring monarchies, for the purpose of attacking them, in order to prevent others from following an example so discouraging to the defenders of the country. When thus threatened by invasion, they sent to Joshua to claim his protection. Mindful of the league between them, however wrongfully obtained, and encouraged by the Divine assurance of a complete victory—taking a considerable body of picked men, and leaving the bulk of the army at Gilgal, which was still the head-quarters of the Israelites, Joshua marched to the relief of the Gibeonites. He concerted his measures on this occasion with so much prudence, and executed them with so much vigour and despatch, that in his attack upon the enemy, the next day, he succeeded in defeating and totally routing the superior force of the confederated kings. As they fled, "the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them, and they died, and there were more that died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword." A still greater miracle was that which followed: Joshua, fearing that the day would fail before he had completed his victory, cried aloud, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon!" And we are told "the sun stood still and the moon stayed until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies." This transaction has been variously understood; that there was a miracle, and a great miracle, is clear; but as the apparent diurnal motion of the sun is really that of the earth on its own axis, it would seem to have been described in terms conformable to the knowledge of the times and the notions of the people.

Of the precise mode in which the miracle took place, two solutions may be given, though it must necessarily ever be impossible to determine positively which of them is the true one. Seeing that "all things are possible with God," the effect *may* have been owing to the actual cessation of the earth's motion round the sun. This, however, without a further and equally miraculous interposition of Almighty power, would have produced the most tremendous effects, not only upon the globe itself, but perhaps upon the entire solar system, and the equilibrium of the whole material universe. The natural consequence of such a sudden check in the course of the earth would have been, by means of the atmosphere, to crush at once all animal and vegetable existence, to level with the ground the most lofty and massive structures, and in fact to sweep the whole surface of the globe as with the besom of destruction. Yet the same power which was competent to stay the globe in its diurnal revolution, was equally competent to guard against any destructive consequences arising from it, and the miracle may have been wrought in the way now described. But the more probable explanation seems to be that which concludes the phenomenon described to have been merely optical; that the rotatory motion of the earth was not disturbed; but that, instead of this, the light of the sun and moon was supernaturally prolonged by the operation of the same laws of refraction and reflection that ordinarily cause the sun to appear above the horizon when he really is below it. He who created the heavenly luminaries, and established the laws which regulate the transmission of light, may at this time have so influenced the medium through which the sun's rays passed, as to render the sun still visible long after the time when in ordinary circumstances it would have disappeared. This would of course have had all the visible effect of actually bringing the earth to a pause in its revolution round its axis, and as this answers all the demands of the text, no one need be solicitous to seek any more satisfactory solution of the difficulty.

With respect to the moon, the injunction addressed to it seems to mean, that as the sun was to stay from setting over Gibeon, so the moon should pause from rising or advancing over Ajalon, because the appearance of the moon is the signal for the coming on of night, which Joshua wished to be delayed. Certain it is that the light of the moon, even when visible, is of little consequence while the sun is above the horizon. And as it would seem that the sun was at this time near the horizon, this command to the moon may be taken to have been introduced merely as a poetical ornament to make out the parallelism so common to the poetical style of the Hebrews.

This interposition of Divine Providence at the word of man enabled the Israelites to complete their victory by utterly dispersing the enemy. The five kings who escaped from the field of battle took shelter in a cave, where they were discovered and put to death in a most ignominious manner, after the chiefs of Israel had set their feet upon their necks, which was in those times a well-known mode of expressing triumph over a vanquished foe, and as such is often represented upon the monuments of Persia and of Egypt.

Encouraged by these successes, the Israelites no longer hesitated to attack the strong, fortified towns, which had seemed impregnable to their fathers, and under their able commander they soon made themselves masters of all the strongholds and chief cities of Southern Palestine, and with them the territories which they commanded.

The north, which, in the absence of imminent danger, had hitherto rested in quiet, now became seriously alarmed; and a powerful confederacy was formed under Jabin, king of Hazor, to resist the further progress of the invaders: all the remaining strength of Canaan seems to have been concentrated in this operation, and great reliance seems to have been placed upon the iron-armed war-chariots, which were, in fact, very dreadful to the Hebrews. So formidable, indeed, was the confederacy, and so vast the host assembled against Israel on this occasion, that the Lord judged it needful to give Joshua renewed assurances of protection and victory, and commanded him to attack the Canaanites on the following day. Joshua obeyed, and obtained a complete and apparently easy victory over the unwieldy host which lay encamped by "the waters of Merom" (the lake Huleh). After this brilliant success, the Hebrews found no power strong enough to make head against them. They carried their victories to the northernmost parts of Palestine, and to the borders of Zidon and the Phœnician territory. On their return they destroyed Hazor, and its king, who had taken refuge in his capital, and who had been lord paramount of all the petty sovereigns in this part of Palestine. Hazor was on this account destroyed, as an example of severity; but all the other cities, which were either carried by assault or surrendered, were preserved for the use of the Israelites.

It is observable that the history of this campaign offers the first notice of horses in Palestine, and they are not again mentioned directly till the time of David. So much vain-glory was attached to the use of horses and war-chariots in military action, and the possession of this kind of force so usually led to enterprises of foreign conquest, that the use of them was forbidden to the Israelites, whose possessions were to be limited to Palestine; Joshua, therefore, in obedience to the orders he received, destroyed the horses and burned the chariots which fell into his hands.

Although many strong positions still remained in the hands of the Canaanites, the land may be considered as having been by this time subdued by the Israelites. It may be asked—What became of the natives? It is answered, that most of those who at the commencement of the war fell into the hands of the Hebrews were slain without mercy. The Canaanites without doubt would have treated them with equal severity had they been the victors. No quarter was given or taken in these ancient warfares: and the pictures which the representations on the Egyptian monuments offer of the revolting treatment of war-captives by a people so high in material civilization as the ancient Egyptians, tend greatly to diminish our surprise at the painful details which the books of Joshua and Judges offer.

After the first heat of the warfare had passed, it does not appear that the Israelites considered it their duty to destroy the conquered Canaanites; but were content to lay them under tribute. Some Canaanitish tribes seem to have quitted the country altogether. It incidentally transpires in Josh. xxiv. 12, that some of them were driven out by "the hornet," in accordance with a promise held out in Exod. xxiii. 28, and Deut. vii. 20. This term of hornet probably denotes the formidable insect which Bruce describes under the name of *Zimb*. The Lord, who promised thus to drive them out, is able to make the humblest of his creatures the instruments of his highest purposes; but, even apart from this consideration, there exist historical notices and traditions of nations thus driven from their seats by insect plagues.

SUNDAY XIX.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

PETER, in his ardent attachment to his Master, was more especially moved, and he began to reprehend notions so unworthy the glory of the Messiah, saying:—"Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee." This interference drew from the mild Jesus one of the severest reprehensions he ever uttered, and which is the more signal in connection with the high encomium which the faith of this Apostle had lately drawn from the same lips which now reproved him.

About eight days after this, our Lord, accompanied by his three most favoured Apostles, Peter, James, and John, withdrew into the solitude of a mountain, supposed to be Mount Tabor, to pray. While they were there, the Apostles were favoured with a glimpse of that heavenly glory in their Divine Master which belonged to his higher nature. "He was transfigured before them; and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." Suddenly there also appeared with him Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory, and were heard by the Apostles to speak with him of the death he was soon to suffer in Jerusalem. There was a significance in this, which may escape a reader who is not informed that there was a general notion among the Jews that Moses and Elias were to appear on earth in the time of the Messiah. Peter, absorbed in the splendour of this appearance, and forgetful of life's cares and troubles, cried out in a rapture, "Master, it is good to be here:—and let us make three tabernacles,—one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias." By "tabernacles" he meant booths formed of branches of trees, such as travellers construct when they meet with a pleasant spot, unmindful of time and business. The words had scarce been finished, when a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice was heard from out of the cloud, saying:—"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him." Overpowered by the radiant light, and awed by that voice, the men fell to the ground as if struck by lightning; and they stirred not until Jesus himself touched them and told them to arise. When they then looked up, they saw that no one but their Master was present, and he had resumed his usual appearance. He charged them to relate this glorious vision to no one, till the Son of Man should have risen from the dead: and they promised compliance, although they could not but question one another as to what his "rising from the dead" might mean.

On rejoining the other Apostles below the mountain, they were found to be under much perplexity and concern; it was about a very distressing and violent case of demoniacal possession, which the Apostles, in the absence of their Master, had attempted to relieve; and the attempt being abortive, had been much chafed on that account, by the Scribe who happened to be present. When the approach of Jesus was perceived, one man hastened out of the crowd to meet him, and kneeling down before him, explained the matter. He said, "Lord, have mercy on my son (for he is mine only child): for he is lunatic, and sore vexed; for oft-times he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And lo! a spirit taketh him, and teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away; and I spake to thy disciples, that they should cast him out, and they could not." He added, that he had been thus affected from infancy. Christ then directed the lad to be brought to him, and no sooner did he appear in that august presence, than he fell into one of those violent convulsions of which the father had spoken, and who now implored more earnestly for relief: "If thou canst do anything, have compassion upon us, and help us." Jesus answered, "If thou canst believe,—all things are possible to him that believeth." The man replied, with tears, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Touched by this answer, Jesus at once commanded the deaf and dumb spirit to come forth; and he was obeyed, though not without such rending throes as left the lad like one dead. Some, indeed, said that he was dead: but Jesus took him by the hand, lifted him up, and restored him perfectly cured to his amazed and rejoicing parent. The disciples afterwards took an opportunity of asking him why they could not effect this cure; and, as might be expected, he said that it arose from the defect of their faith, and from their want of sufficient confidence in the powers which he had bestowed upon them.

There was a sacred tribute paid yearly by every adult male in Israel to the treasury of the Temple. The amount was half a shekel, regarded in the time of Christ as equivalent to a didrachma, by which name the piece of money that paid it is called in the Gospels. When the usual time of payment came round, the collectors at Capernaum inquired of Peter whether his master paid the tribute. He replied in the affirmative: but when he mentioned the matter to Jesus, he was asked: "What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take tribute? of their own children, or o strangers?" Peter of course replied, "Of strangers;" and Jesus rejoined, "Then are the children free." But although thus free, he directed the tribute to be paid, that there might be no occasion to allege that he despised the Temple. But they had not the money. The Saviour of the World was not possessed of fifteen pence. But all things were in his power and knowledge. He directed Peter to go and angle in the lake, and open the mouth of the first fish he took The Apostle did so; and he found in the fish a coin called a stater, equal to a shekel, which the fish had doubtless lately swallowed. This was enough to pay two tributes, and Christ directed Peter to pay with it for both.

When our Lord was afterwards with his disciples in the house which they occupied, he questioned them respecting a discussion in which they had been engaged on the road. But no one answered: all being ashamed to confess that they had been disputing which of them should be the greatest in their Master's kingdom, which they still conceived to be of this world. But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, took a little child into his arms, and told them that they who laid aside the pride of life, and became as unambitious, gentle, and teachable as little children, were likely to take the highest place in the kingdom of heaven. After some discourse with them, inculcating the necessity of such dispositions in the heritors of the divine kingdom, our Lord concluded by the striking parable of the king who commanded an officer, who owed ten thousand talents, to be sold, with his wife and children, for slaves, in payment of the debt: but was moved by his supplication to compassion, and forgave his vast debt. The same person, on going forth from the presence, found a fellow-servant, who owed him the paltry sum of a hundred pence (*denarii*), and, instead of extending to him the mercy he had just received, seized him by the throat, and cast him into prison till he should pay the debt. But this act was the ruin of the merciless creditor; for when his lord heard of it, he was angry, and, after administering a just rebuke, "delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him." By this parable Christ taught that they who hoped forgiveness of heaven should be forgiving one to another. Soon after this, Christ sent forth seventy of his disciples, to spread abroad the tidings by which their own souls had been gladdened. In sending them forth, he enjoined them to manifest such earnestness of demeanour, such freedom from small cares, as might make it plain to every passer-by that their minds were full of the most important business, and that they were earnestly intent on the immediate despatch of it. They were not to encumber themselves with provisions of food or clothing, nor tarry by the way to exchange the long and ceremonious greetings for which the Orientals have always been notorious For the same reason, Elisha gave the same injunction to Gehazi, when he sent him on a message intended to be speedily delivered.

It will be recollected that Jesus had abstained from attending at Jerusalem at the last Passover. Autumn had now come, and with it the pleasant Feast of Tabernacles. The "brethren" of Jesus perceiving that he manifested no intention to attend this feast either, urged him to do so. Their feeling in this it is not difficult to discover. They, who had always had the human presence of Christ before their eyes, found it peculiarly difficult to believe in him with entire fixedness. The miracles which they saw him perform inclined them to belief, but they were ever anxious to receive proofs yet more manifest of the divine dignity to which he laid claim. They now wished to see him in the great theatre of the metropolis; still expecting, probably, the arrival of a decisive moment in which he would reveal himself with power as the Messiah. This moment, they supposed, would come as soon as matters should be brought to a crisis by his appearance among his enemies at Jerusalem. Jesus, however, being unwilling to excite attention without necessity, did not consider the present moment, when the bulk of the people were in the road, as the most suitable. He suffered his brethren to depart alone; but afterwards went up to the holy city in a private manner with his disciples.

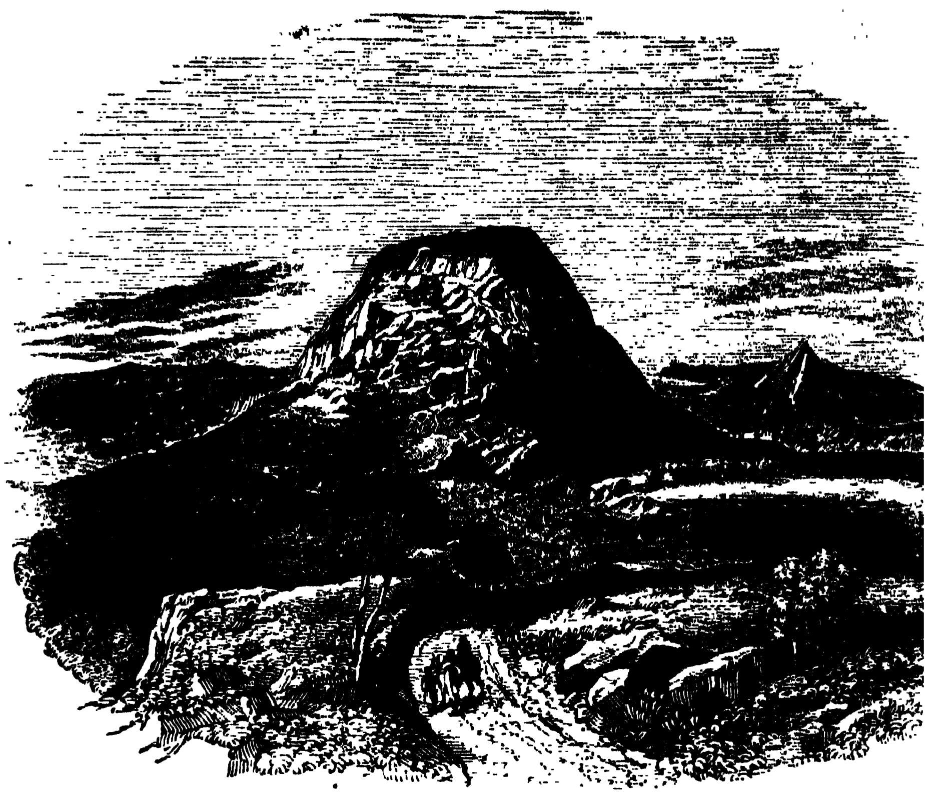
At Jerusalem the expectations of the assembled multitudes were alive concerning him, and with different feelings men talked eagerly to one another about the probabilities of his appearance. At length he appeared.



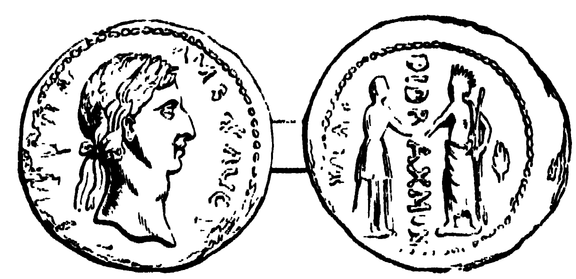
491.—The Transfiguration. (Overbeck.)
Y Gweddnewidiad.



495.—Eastern Prisoner.
Carcharor Dwyreiniol.



492.—Mount Tabor.
Mynydd Tabor.



493.—Grecian Didrachma, conjectured to be one of Nerva's. From a Specimen in the National Collection.
Didrachma Groegaidd, yr eiddo Nerva fel y tybir. Oddi wrth esiampl yn y Casgliad Cenhedlaethol.



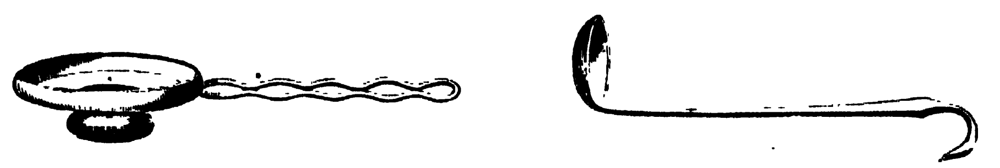
494.—Parable of the King and the Debtor.
Dammeg y Brenin a'r Dyledwr.



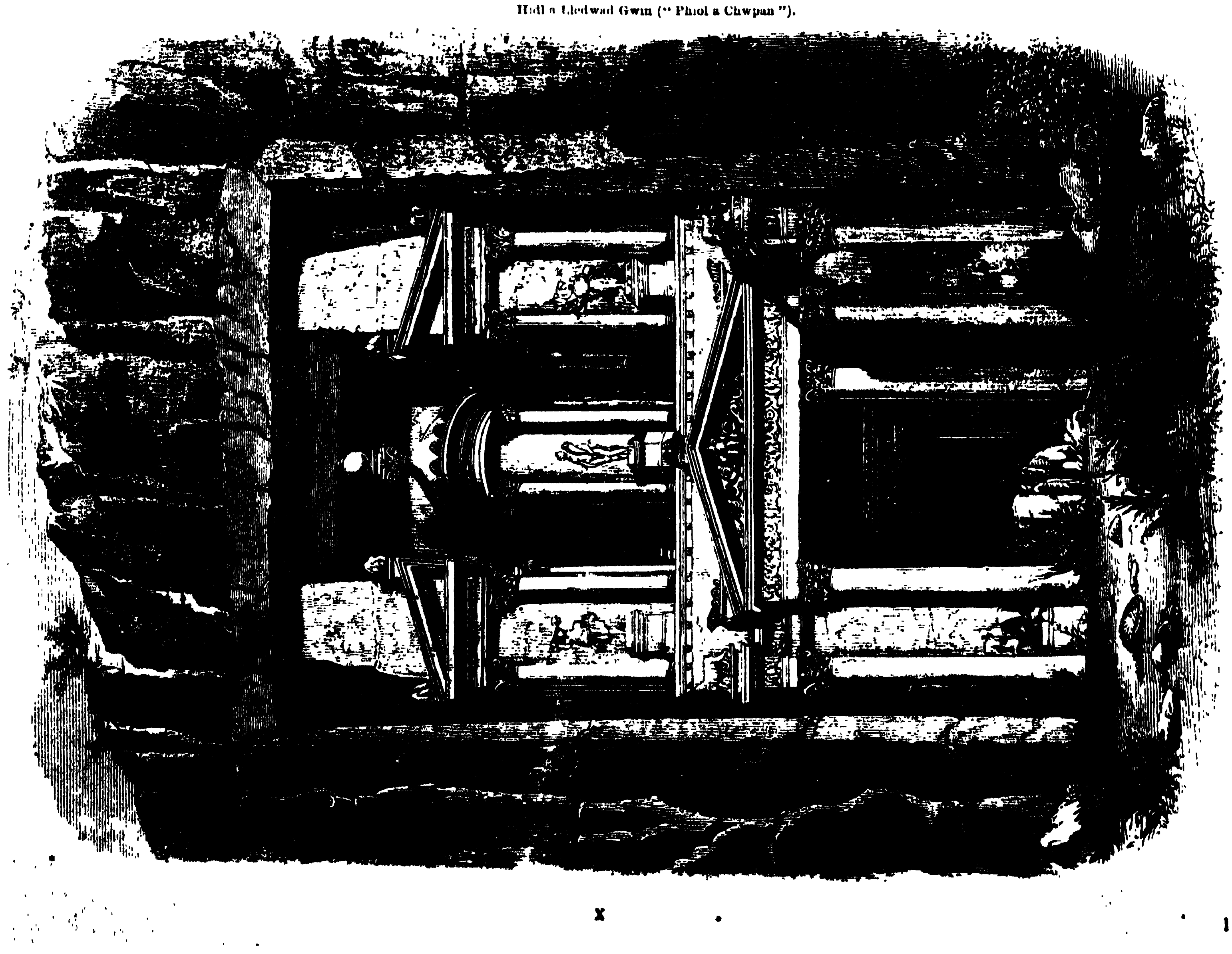
497.—Petra. Ruins of a Temple built in the "clefts of the rock."—Jer. xlix. 16.
Petra. Adfeilion Teml a adeiladwyd yng "nghromlechydd y graig."



498.—Rock Valley in the vicinity of Petra.—Jer. xlix.
The Entrance to a Tomb is shown on the left, and the Remains of an Amphitheatre in the distance.
Dyffryn Craig yn ardal Petra.
Adeiladwaith mynedfa i Feddrod ar y chwith, a Gweddillion Amchwareufa yn y pellder.



496.—Strainer and Ladle for Wine.—Jer. xxxv.
Hidl a Lledwad Gwin (" Phiol a Chwpan ").



499.—Temple at Petra.—Jer. xlix.
Teml yn Petra.

SUNDAY XX.—THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.

JEREMIAH is peculiarly pointed in his prophecies against the Edomites, who dwelt in the mountains of Seir; and in some recent publications, such as that of Dr. Keith on the Evidence from Prophecy, it has been shown how strikingly those prophecies have been accomplished. It is not to be denied that the eagerness for illustrative points has been carried by some pious and able writers into some extravagance and minuteness of detail, against which the more recent travellers, even though themselves divines (such as Dr. Olin), begin to protest. This is the natural recoil from an attempt to prove too much, and to find in the language of prophecy a more than usually minute application of the general images and expressions by which the desolation of Edom is described. The prophets foretold those desolations, they foretold many of the attendant circumstances, and they employed expressions and images naturally derived from the well-known position of the Edomites as a people dwelling among rocks and precipices. It is indeed probable that many of the expressions apply in particular to the capital in Petra, to whose wonderful excavated remains so much attention has been of late years attracted. The present series appear indeed to be of a date later than the prophets; but the town was the capital of Edom before the prophecies were delivered, and as such had been taken by the kings of Judah (2 Kings xiv. 7), to whom the Edomites were for some time tributary.

To show the just effect which may be obtained by putting in juxtaposition some passages of these prophecies with the incidental statements of travellers, who, for the most part, had anything but the illustration of Scripture in view, we shall occupy this page with a few striking examples. It may be proper to premise that Petra, the name of the capital of Edom, means *a rock*, and Selah, which is the scriptural name for it, has the same signification.

"Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thy heart, *O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock*, that holdest *the height of the hill;* though thou shouldest make thy nest *as high as the eagle*, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord" (Jer. xlix. 16).

"The ascent for a considerable distance up the side of the mountains is not very steep; and we saw many ruined terraces, the evidences and remains of a flourishing agriculture, which in the prosperous days of Edom clothed these now sterile mountains with fertility and beauty. The region before us was crowded with red perpendicular masses of rock, regularly stratified, very lofty and broken into fragments of mountains, rather than forming a regular chain. In their bosom is Petra. The ruined city lies in a narrow valley surrounded by lofty and, for the most part, precipitous mountains. Those which form its southern limit are not so steep as to be impassable: and it was over these, or rather through them, along an abrupt and difficult ravine, that we wound our laborious way into this scene of magnificent desolation" (Olin's 'Travels in the East,' ii. 15).

The same writer, however, with reference to this very passage, and that of Obadiah (verse 3), "Thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rocks, whose habitation is high," justly observes, that although usually cited with reference to Petra, they are to be understood in a more extended application. "They are no doubt strikingly descriptive of the situation of Petra in a deep fissure of the mountain, and at the same time elevated three thousand feet or more above the level of the sea, and not less than two thousand perhaps above Wady Arabah. But they are equally applicable to the whole region of Mount Seir, in reference to which they seem to have been used, at least by Obadiah. The deep valleys, bounded by high steep cliffs which pervade every part of the country, and which must always have contained the chief part of the population, are well described as 'clefts of the rocks, and heights of the hills,' as 'high habitations'" (Olin, ii. 58).

"The barren state of the country, together with the desolate condition of the inhabitants, seem strongly to verify the judgment pronounced against it" (Irby and Mangles, p. 439). The same travellers mention, that when Mr. Bankes applied at Constantinople to have Kereh and Wady Mousa (Petra) inserted in his firman, answer was returned that "they knew of no such place within the Grand Seignor's dominions." This has been adduced in illustration of Jer. xlix. 15, "I will make thee small among the heathen, and despised among men."

"If grape-gatherers came to thee, would they not have left thee some gleaning grapes? If thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough. But I have made Esau bare. And Edom shall be a desolation: every one that goeth by shall be astonished and hiss at the plagues thereof. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbouring cities thereof, saith the Lord, no man shall abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell in it" (Jer. xlix. 9, 10, 17, 18).

"The whole plain presented to the view an expanse of shifting sands, whose surface was broken by innumerable inundations and low hills. . . . And the Arabs told me that the valleys continue to present the same appearance beyond the latitude of Wady Mousa (Petra). In some parts of the valley the sand is very deep, and there is not the slightest appearance of a road, or of any work of human hand. A few trees grow among the sand-hills, but the *depth of sand* precludes all vegetation of herbage. The sand which thus covers the ancient cultivated soil appears to have been *brought from the shores of the Red Sea* by the southern winds" (Burckhardt, p. 442).

With reference to the above and other prophecies of similar import, Dr. Olin remarks:—"Such was the language uttered by the Jewish prophets while this doomed region was yet prosperous and powerful. It portrays a state of desolation and ruin the most absolute and irretrievable, such as probably no portion of the globe, once fertile and populous, now exhibits. These fearful denunciations and their fulfilment furnish an invulnerable argument in favour of the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures; and the present state of this once rich and beautiful region is a terrible monument of the divine displeasure against wickedness and idolatry."

It is somewhat surprising how often the prophets mention the presence of wild-fowl in connection with the desolations of Edom. Perhaps there is nothing peculiar in this, as the presence of those wild birds which shun the abodes of men naturally occur as images of desolation, and are mentioned in connection with other desolations than that of Edom. Still the combination of the ancient prophecy and the present fact has a striking effect, and shows, as strongly as any precise correspondence of details, the accomplishment of the predictions.

"The cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it. . . . The screech-owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate" (Isa. xxxiv. 11, 14, 15).

"I was often reminded of the prediction of the prophet (Isa. xxxiv.) by the multitude and the noise of the wild-fowl, 'each answering to his mate.' Our party shot two or three large eagles, and many partridges—the cormorant, it is said, of the Old Testament" (Olin, ii. 48). "The screaming of the eagles, hawks, and owls, who, soaring above our heads in considerable numbers, added much to the irregularity of the scene" (Irby and Mangles, p. 413). Mr. Kinnear remarks, that vultures were the only birds of prey which he observed; they were generally seen in pairs, "soaring above the valley or perched upon the rocks. Partridges, pigeons, a species of blackbird, and numbers of small singing birds were seen every day." This abundance of wild birds is certainly sufficiently indicative of a desolated and unfrequented site. It is not likely that more than this was intended to be indicated; and the last-named traveller (Kinnear's 'Cairo, Petra, and Damascus,' pp. 155, 159) with much good sense remarks, "There is abundant evidence of the complete fulfilment of the prophecies against Edom, without descending to these minute and literal details, to which so much importance has been attached. I have seen nothing to confirm the statements we have read, of the very minute coincidences between the present condition of the country and *the very words* of prophecy; as if there were not a plant or animal mentioned in the highly figurative description of the desolation which was to come upon Edom, that might not be found in or near the deserted city." . . . "The ruins of Petra teach a far more impressive lesson than is to be learned in curiously searching after these minute literalities. We see in her present condition not only the accomplishment of all the denunciations against Edom, but a warning of the certainty with which all God's righteous judgments against sin will be fulfilled; and, if we read the lesson aright, every fragment of the desolated city will seem to address us with solemn admonition, 'Think ye that they were sinners above all men, because they suffered such things: I tell ye nay, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.'"

SUNDAY XX.—BIBLE HISTORY.

THE operations which have been described, and which left the Israelites paramount in Canaan, seem to have occupied about five years, during which not fewer than thirty-five of the petty kings of Canaan had been dispossessed of their dominions. It then seemed that sufficient connected territory had been acquired to provide for three of the tribes, on the same liberal scale as the two tribes and a half beyond the Jordan. The decision of God in the distribution of this territory was appealed to by a solemn lot, which assigned it to Judah, Ephraim, and the unprovided half-tribe of Manasseh. This first division of lands took place in the year B.C. 1602.

Before the internal distribution to particular families was made of the territory thus assigned, Caleb put in a claim to a separate provision, in virtue of a promise made by Moses, that he should inherit the land in which he had beheld the gigantic Anakim, who had struck such terror into the other spies, but by whom his own faithful heart and that of Joshua himself had not been appalled. This Caleb, it will be remembered, and Joshua, were the only two who were adults at the exode, who were permitted to enter the Promised Land. The lands which Caleb had in view were accordingly assigned to him, being Hebron and its neighbourhood. This territory was still in the hands of the enemy; but Caleb undertook to get possession of it when assigned to him. He did so. At Debir he offered the hand of his daughter as a prize for him who should take that place for him. The exploit was undertaken and successfully accomplished by his nephew Othniel, to whom custom gave a sort of right to her hand, and who would have incurred some dishonour had he allowed the superior daring of another to take that right from him. As Othniel was about to conduct home his bride, she intimated to him her dissatisfaction at the unwatered lands which Caleb had given as her dower, and got his consent to allow her to ask her father for "springs of water." This was a great thing to ask; but Caleb was kind, and gave her "both the upper and the nether springs."

Hitherto the camp had remained at Gilgal, and there was the altar and tabernacle. But it now seemed desirable to remove the head-quarters to a more centrical place; and Shiloh, in the land of Ephraim, was deemed the most suitable station. The removal took place with much pomp. On the way, Joshua was enabled to follow the directions of Moses respecting an imposing ceremony which he had ordered to be celebrated on the mountains of Ebal and Gerizim. In the valley between the mountains were stationed the priests with the ark, while the mountains themselves were lined with the tribes, six on each side. The curses of the law upon the wrong-doer and the disobedient were then pronounced from Mount Ebal, and its blessings upon the well-doer and the obedient from Mount Gerizim; and as each clause was pronounced, one mighty "Amen" proclaimed the assent of the vast host to the conditions upon which they were taking possession of their heritage.

A sort of desultory warfare with the unsubdued natives seems to have occupied the ensuing five or six years, without any such vigorous operations as had marked the earlier warfare. From this state of comparative inertion the tribes were roused by the reproof from Joshua: "How long are ye slack to go in to possess the land which the Lord, the God of your fathers, hath given you?" It then seems to have occurred to him that if the whole country, conquered and unconquered, were actually distributed among the seven tribes for which no provision had been made, a new and effectual stimulus would be given to their exertions. But experience had shown that the previous distribution had been made on insufficient information as to the extent of the land to be divided; and therefore it was directed that a new survey of all the country should be made by three competent persons from each tribe, who should write down the particulars in a book. It is not improbable that some attempt at mapping the surveyed lands was made on this occasion, especially when we bear in mind that the art of land-surveying had its origin in the country from which the Hebrews had come. And indeed it is difficult to make out how the nice discrimination of particulars and boundary points which we find in the chapters which follow this statement, and which are manifestly the results of the survey, could have been intelligible without some kind of mapped delineations.

After seven months, the surveyors returned with the requisite particulars entered in their books. The lots for the distribution of the territory among the seven tribes were then taken "before the Lord" at Shiloh, and the lots drawn were found to be in very exact accordance with the prophetic intimations respecting the future condition of all the tribes which Jacob had delivered to his sons. This second and final distribution took place in the year B.C. 1596.

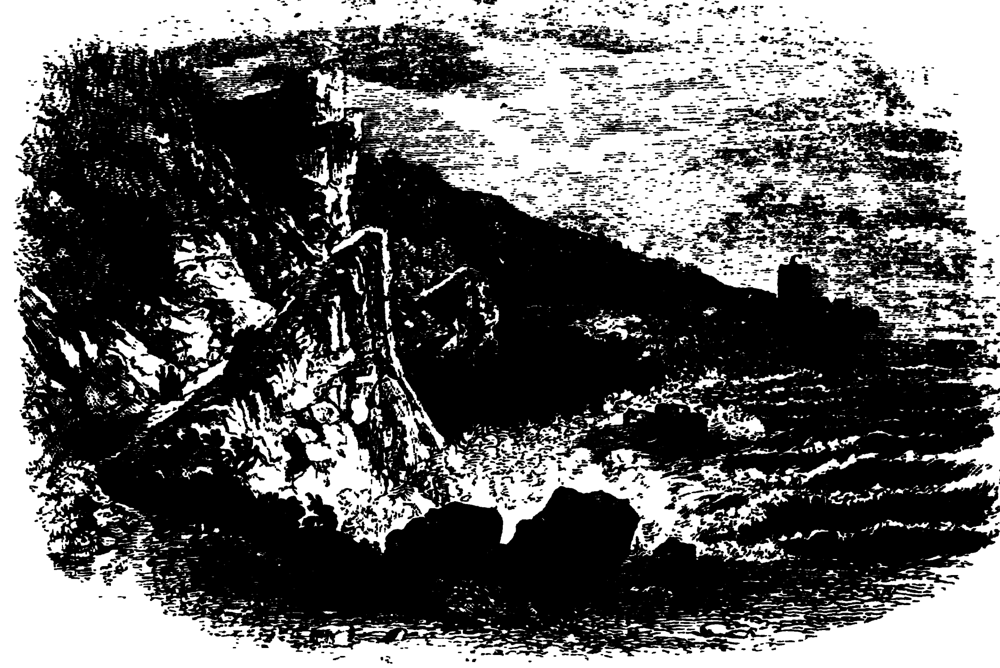
The whole of the territory being now distributed, it was found that JUDAH possessed a larger territory in southernmost Canaan, containing one hundred and fourteen towns, besides many villages. Jerusalem lay partly in this tribe, and partly in that of Benjamin; but the native inhabitants, the Jebusites, were not at this time expelled from it, and retained possession till a much later period. The inheritance of EPHRAIM and of the half-tribe of MANASSEH extended from the Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea, across the land, and it lay to the north of Judah. This contained most of the country which was eventually known by the name of Samaria. Of this district, Ephraim had the southern, and Manasseh the northern portion. The portion of BENJAMIN was situated between those of Judah, Ephraim, and Manasseh. The survey had shown that Judah had received more than its fair proportion of territory, and therefore at this second distribution a portion for another tribe was taken out of the south-west part of it. This portion fell to SIMEON. To ZEBULON fell the tract of country nearest to the lake of Gennesareth, in the region of Galilee. The possession of ISSACHAR lay to the south of this, and reached from the Jordan almost to the Mediterranean. The lot of ASHER formed the most northern portion of the land, and reached to the roots of Lebanon, and was only excluded from the sea by the strip of coast retained by the Zidonians. The inheritance of NAPHTALI lay to the east of Asher, and touched on the waters of the Upper Jordan, and the northern part of the lake of Tiberias. DAN's proper territory lay to the north and north-west of Judah; but it afterwards acquired new possessions far to the north among the sources of the Jordan. The portions allotted to REUBEN, GAD, and half Manasseh, on the other side of the Jordan, have already been pointed out. The LEVITES had no share in this distribution; but in compensation, they had the use of the tithes, and forty-eight towns for residence among the several tribes were allotted to them. Six of these towns, three on each side the Jordan, were made "cities of refuge," or places appointed under the law of Moses as asylums for persons who had committed homicide, and who, so soon as they came within the walls, were safe from the pursuit of the avenger of blood, who, under old Eastern usages, which still subsist in many countries, claimed the right of slaying, wherever found, the slayer of his next of kin. This institution imposed a strong restraint upon a custom liable to much abuse, but which it seems to have been deemed not prudent to abolish altogether.

The forty thousand men from the two tribes and a half beyond the Jordan had hitherto, according to their agreement, faithfully attended their brethren in all their wars against the Canaanites. They had no territorial interest in the matter; but they shared and were enriched by the spoils of the armies they defeated and the towns they conquered. The time was now come when they might be dismissed to their own homes, in doing which Joshua solemnly exhorted them to "take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law which Moses, the servant of our Lord, had charged them, to love the Lord their God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all their heart and with all their soul." He then blessed them, and sent them away.

When they reached the other side of the Jordan, these men set up a great altar, probably in some distinguishing feature similar to the one at Shiloh, as a monument, to prove to future ages their relation to the tribes on the other side of the river, their interest in the worship and service of God at his sanctuary, and their right, and that of their posterity, to join in all the ordinances there administered. To their brethren, however, this transaction bore a very different and suspicious appearance. They concluded at once that the altar was intended for sacrifice, and the basis of a separate establishment for worship, contrary to the law which allowed but the one altar before the tabernacle, which was designed to be the single object of attention to united Israel.



502.—Zidon.—Josh. xix.
Sidon.



501.—Sea-Coast between Tyre and Sidon.—Josh. xix.
Goror y Môr rhwng Tyrus a Sidon.



503.—Monumental Pillars.



500.—Caleb's Daughter at the Springs. (Adapted from Poussin.)—Josh. xv.
... (Wedi ei gyfaddasu o Poussin.)



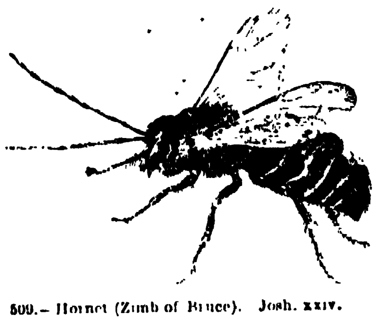
506.—Captives Bound.
Caethion Rhwymedig.



508.—Charge of Joshua. (Adapted from the Antique.)—Josh. xxiii.
Anogaeth Josua. (Wedi ei gyfaddasu o Hen waith.)



504.—Stones of Memorial.
Meini Coffadwriaeth.



509.—Hornet (Zimb of Bruce). Josh. xxiv.
Cacwn.



505.—Ancient Syrian Chief addressing the People.
Pennaeth Syriaidd Hynafol yn anerch y Bobl.



507.—Joshua and Eleazar dividing the Land by Lot. (Host.)—Josh. xviii.
Josua ac Eleasar yn rhanu'r Tir wrth Goelbren.

This supposed defection and disobedience, therefore, threw the tribes into a state of great excitement; and they prepared for immediate war to bring the apostates to punishment. The cooler judgment of Joshua and of Eleazer the high-priest, however, suggested the propriety of sending a deputation to inquire into the matter. The men whose act had raised this commotion were much startled at the design thus imputed to them, of seeking the very object which it had been their solicitude to avert. They explained their real intention, with which the tribes west of the river were not only satisfied, but pleased.

Several following years were distinguished by no great actions. The tribes, having already as many towns and as much land as their numbers allowed them to occupy, do not seem to have prosecuted the war with much vigour; but were contented with the rest and plenty they actually enjoyed.

About fourteen years after the final distribution of the lands, Joshua, being then far advanced in years, and knowing that his end drew nigh, convened the people, that he might give them his last counsels, and receive from them the renewed assurance of their faithfulness and obedience to the Divine institutions. After briefly sketching their past history, and pointing out the special mercies of God towards them, he called upon them to decide at once and solemnly, whether they would accept the high destinies and consequent obligations to which they had been called, or would rather conform to the practices and worship of the nations around them. "But as for me, and my house," he added, "we will serve the Lord." The people answered, "The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey!" This amounted to a formal renewal of the covenant into which they had entered at Sinai. So they intended it, and so it was accepted by Joshua, who wrote down the terms of it in the book of the law; and by way of public testimonial, he, according to the custom of the times, set up a great stone of memorial, under a tree which grew near the sanctuary of God. The words he used on this occasion clearly point out the object and leading idea of such stones of testimony: "Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he spake unto us: it shall therefore be a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God." Monuments of this kind, in the shape of single stones, or heaped up, or variously arranged, or formed into pillars of memorial, call to mind the still subsisting and similar records of a remote age, which are found in different parts of the world, and which are not wanting in Syria and Palestine.

Not long after this Joshua died, at the age of one hundred and ten years (B.C. 1582), being the oldest man then in Israel, unless Caleb were still alive.

The character of Joshua affords an interesting study to those who take interest in the history of the Jewish people. At the first view he may seem to derive his eminence only from the greatness of the circumstances in which he is placed; but a closer inspection shows him always, under the Divine King, at the head of these circumstances, and develops many traits of character which claim our admiration and respect. In him we find that rare combination of talents which go to form at once the warrior and the statesman; and if his career was less brilliant and his position less commanding than that of Moses, he showed himself equally fit for the peculiar services which devolved upon him, and for the station to which he was called. He was brave without temerity, active without precipitation, and possessed the rare art of making himself obeyed without becoming imperious. He shrank from no difficulties, he neglected no duty, and he suffered no advantage to be lost. In the passage of the Jordan, the judgment of Achan, the taking of Ai, we find nothing neglected which might cause the miracle to make a profound impression, the punishment to be acknowledged just, and the victory to be decisive. The generation which he governed was superior to that which came out of Egypt, and he was in consequence better obeyed than Moses. As a minister of the Divine judgments, he executed them without weakness or failure, but also with calmness, and without passion or fury. His piety is gentle, though decisive, and his confidence firm, though manifested more in action than in words. In his last charge to the people, and in the effect which his solemn farewell was framed to produce, we recognise the pupil of a Moses, and a faithful servant of the Theocracy. Lastly, we behold in Joshua a conqueror more void of pride, and more dead to ambition, than any other which history records.

The death of Joshua was soon followed by that of Eleazer the high-priest, who was succeeded by his son Phinehas. Gradually also "the elders who outlived Joshua" dropped off, and the people were left without that direction and control for general objects under which they had hitherto been. It must not, however, be supposed that they were entirely without control and government. This was by no means the case; the division into tribes gave them hereditary chiefs and heads of families, whose authority was great within the tribes to which they belonged, and quite sufficient for the purposes of internal government. This explains how it was that the Israelites managed their affairs even so well as they did in the centuries between the death of Joshua and the election of Saul. The appointment of the so-called Judges does not explain it, for there were few of them who had any substantial authority, or whose influence extended over more than a part of the nation.

But although the division into tribes was, as now in Tartary and Arabia, sufficient for internal government of the tribes themselves, it was insufficient for *national* objects. But if it be asked how it happened that this was not provided for by the appointment of some one to succeed Joshua, it is answered that provision *was* made, and that the Israelites in the troubles which befel them reaped the fruit of neglecting to avail themselves of this provision, and of carrying into effect the Divine intention respecting the general government.

Moses had a special mission to emancipate the people, and to furnish them with laws and institutions suited to the condition they were destined to occupy. Joshua had a special mission to conduct the same people into the land of Canaan, and put them into possession of their heritage. Both these missions had been accomplished, and then it behoved the people to go upon the rules which the law had laid down for their government. Under these rules the internal government of the tribes remained undisturbed, unless the establishment of the Jethroian magistracy interfered in some degree with the powers of the hereditary chiefs, so far as the administration of justice was concerned. But to understand the general government, we must recollect that it was designed to be a theocracy, directly subject to the Divine king, who had in a special manner been accepted as king of Israel. With them he dwelt in his tabernacle-palace, always ready to be consulted, through his high-priest and minister, on matters of government and order. The high-priest, as his representative, and as having more immediate access to him, was the visible head or regent of this government, and his directions were to be followed in matters which did not require an appeal to the supreme king. Of his high court the priests were the inferior ministers, and the Levites the officers and servants, and the establishment for general government was thus perfect in all its parts, and, for all that appears, was destined to be the permanent government for the people.

But the people were not sensible of its importance to them. Finding that they had in their tribes such a government as they understood and had been used to, they soon fell back upon their separate interests, and neglected the more general and larger object in which the whole nation was concerned. The theocratical government was hence neglected, and became inoperative for purposes of good by not being used. And ere long, as they were still subject to external pressure from the Canaanites who remained unsubdued, the whole frame of society fell into disorder from the want of proper cohesion in its parts, and the nation was subject to the calamities which it is the purpose of the book of Judges to record.

Moreover, as the theocratical system was not properly brought out, in all its admirable uses and high purposes, the charges for its maintenance appeared the more burdensome; and we can collect from the record that for the most part the high-priest had by no means the influence or power which his position demanded; that the tithes and other sacerdotal dues were to a great extent left unpaid, so that the Levites who entirely depended upon this provision, were often without the means of support; that the people generally neglected the yearly attendance at the altar which the law required, and that, in consequence, a very general ignorance of their own laws and religion, and of their peculiar place among the nations with the privileges and duties which belonged to it, overspread the nation to an extent which must be appreciated to enable us to understand some of the very extraordinary circumstances which ere long took place.

For a considerable time after the death of Joshua and the elders who outlived him, the Israelites who had quite as much land and as many towns as they could well occupy, rested quiet, minding their own affairs, and took no pains to drive out those Canaanites who still remained unsubdued and held possession of the strongest posts in the country. The latter were thus enabled to gather strength and confidence, and as the wonderful victories of the Israelites and the miraculous interpositions of the Divine favour in their behalf became more remote, they began to imagine that the invaders were not, after all, so formidable as had at first been supposed.

SUNDAY XX.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

AFTER his arrival, he taught his doctrines in his usual manner, openly in the porticoes of the temple; and people who knew how strongly the learned and priestly classes were irritated against him, felt some surprise that no one attempted to molest him. "His hour was not yet come," is the simple and abundantly satisfactory reason for this, which the Evangelist assigns.

On the last day of the feast, the Pharisees, who were in authority, did send officers to apprehend him as he taught in the temple; for by that time they perceived that the current of popular opinion was setting in strongly in favour of his claims. Then said one to another, "When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than those which this man hath done?" Some averred, "Of a truth this is the Prophet (which Moses foretold)." Others said, "This is the Christ." But some objected, "Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scripture said that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" The officers sent by the Pharisees paused to hear his discourse, and were so impressed by his words that they made no attempt to arrest him, but returned to their employers, saying, "Never man spake like this man."

Jesus spent the night following in the Mount of Olives, which seems to have been his favourite resort when at Jerusalem. But the next morning found him early in the temple. His enemies then, pursuant to a plan they had formed for ensnaring him, brought before him a woman taken in adultery, and required his judgment upon her case. The law of Moses commanded that an adulteress should be put to death; but they could calculate with some degree of certainty that the merciful Jesus, who had always placed the humble and repentant sinner above the arrogant and self-righteous, would exercise favour towards the offender, and thereby convict himself as a despiser of the law. While they stood accusing the woman and proposing the dilemma they had framed for him, Jesus traced characters on the ground, as people are apt to do when in deep meditation, and appeared to take no heed of what passed. But suddenly he roused himself from his abstraction, and said, "Let him who is without sin among you cast the first stone at her;" and then bent down again to the earth. The corruption of morals among the Jews of that time is notorious; and it is susceptible of proof that many distinguished Rabbins of that period were living in adultery. That all those whom Jesus addressed were *thus* guilty it is not necessary to allege; for every one in whom the consciousness of guilt is in general awakened will hesitate before he plunges himself into condemnation by condemning others. This was the case with them. Touched to the quick by the answer of Jesus, they availed themselves of his abstraction, and slunk away till not one of them remained. Jesus then again raised himself, and perceiving that the woman alone remained, he said, "Woman, where are thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee?" She answered, "No man, Lord:" and he rejoined, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." To exercise the functions of a judge did not belong to him. So he dismissed her with pronouncing sentence upon her past sins. He did not wish to say directly that she was pardoned. But the whole conduct of Jesus, so serious and so solemn, could not fail in the mean time to make a deep impression upon one who, during the whole of the preceding scene, must have felt it necessary to prepare for death.

Several of the discourses which our Lord subsequently delivered are preserved by St. John. In one of them he expressed Abraham's strong realization through faith of the Messianic period, in the words, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and was glad." Grossly misunderstanding this of an earthly intercourse with Abraham, they exclaimed, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" And his answer, "Before Abraham was, I am," so enraged them, that they took up stones to cast at him; but he evaded their assault and left the place.

There was a poor beggar, blind from his birth, who was well known in the streets of Jerusalem. This man's eyes Jesus anointed with clay, and then sent him to wash them in the Pool of Siloam. Instead of deriding means of themselves so inefficient, the man obeyed, and he returned from the pool with the perfect use of both his eyes. This cure upon a person so well known excited more attention than any other miracle which Christ had yet performed. The man was closely questioned, and even his parents were examined as to the previous state of his eyes. But finding no flaw in this great act, they told the man, "Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner." To which he very properly replied, "Whether he be a sinner or no, I cannot tell; one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." His other answers to their questions were so sharp, so much to the purpose, and evinced so much grateful feeling towards his healer, that the questioners became so exasperated, that "they cast him out," or passed a sentence of excommunication upon him. When Jesus heard this, he sought him out, and when he met with him, asked, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" He answered, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe in him?" And when Jesus said, "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee," he readily answered, "Lord, I believe;" and rendered worship to his deliverer.

After this, in order of time, follow several important discourses of Christ. One of them contained the beautiful parable of the Good Shepherd, followed soon after by that of the Good Samaritan. The last of these parables arose in discourse with a Pharisee, who, having stated the great commandments of the law were—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart;" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;"—was told "Thou hast answered right: this do and thou shalt live." But he, being willing to justify himself in the narrow construction which he and all other Jews of his class put upon the latter duty, asked, "And who is my neighbour?" To which Jesus answered by this parable, if it be right to describe as a parable an incident real in all its circumstances, and which might have happened on any day.

It describes a man as "*going down*" from Jerusalem to Jericho, which stands on a plain many hundred feet below the level of Jerusalem, and the road to which lay in part through a rocky wilderness, which was in those days (as Josephus vouches) more beset by robbers than any other road in Palestine. This man was attacked by thieves, who stripped him of his raiment, which is at this day almost always done by Eastern robbers, because the loose clothes of the Orientals can be worn by almost any person of average stature into whose hands they come. And they not only stripped him, but as he had made some resistance, they handled him so severely, that he lay by the roadside half dead with wounds and bruises. Jericho was then a great station for the priests, and priests and Levites were continually passing on the road to and from Jerusalem. A priest, who had been at Jerusalem offering up prayers for the safety of the people, came hard upon the wounded man on his return home; "but when he saw him, he passed by on the other side." Soon after a Levite passed on his way to Jerusalem: he stopped, and even drew nigh and looked upon the poor wretch; but he also went on without rendering assistance to one whom he could not have but recognised as a Jew, and as such a "neighbour," to whom the law required him to show mercy. Next came a Samaritan, one of the people between whom and the Jews an inexorable enmity existed. But he paused not to consider this. Although in haste, and on horseback, he instantly alighted; and hastened to comfort him with wine, and to mollify his stiffening sores with oil. He then placed him carefully upon his own beast, and led him tenderly to the nearest caravanserai, where he left him in charge of the keeper to provide for his wants, with the words, "Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay thee."

When he had concluded this parable, Jesus pointedly asked the questioner, "Which now of these three thinkest thou was neighbour to him that fell among thieves?" He could not but answer, "He that showed mercy on him;" to which our Lord rejoined, "Go thou and do likewise."

About this time the seventy disciples returned to their Master from the mission on which they had been sent. "Lord, even the devils are subject to us through thy name," was their exulting report to him. He replied, "Behold I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you." But to repress in them all pride and conceit in these preternatural gifts, and to correct the notion that these formed their greatest honour, he added—"Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." The future life is here brought forward under the image of an earthly commonwealth, in which the names of citizens were inscribed in a book, from which were occasionally expunged the names of those who were thought unworthy, and who thereby lost their civil rights. The image which ascribes such a book to God is frequent in the Old Testament, and is not rare in the New.



511.—The Jews casting Stones at Jesus.—John viii. 46.
Yr Iuddewon yn taflu Ceryg at yr Iesu.



512.—The Good Shepherd. (Gaspar Poussin.)—John x.
Y Bugail Da.



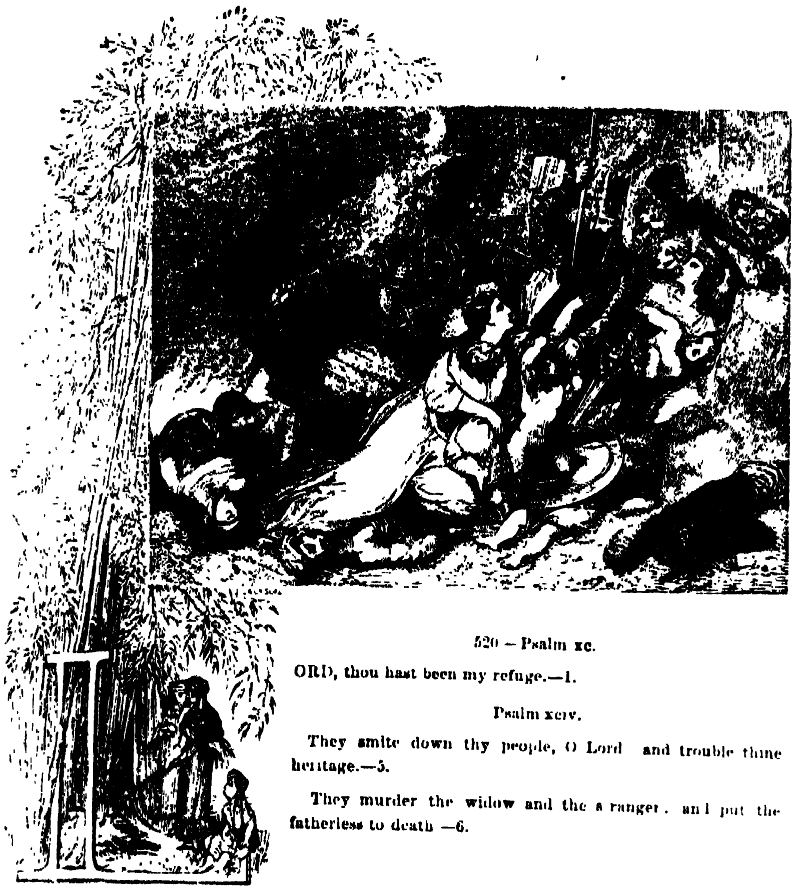
510.—The Woman taken in Adultery. (Rubens.)—John viii.
Y Wraig a ddaliwyd mewn Godineb.



513.—Caravanserai.—Luke ii.
[illegible]



514.—The Good Samaritan.—Luke x.
Y Samariad Trugarog.



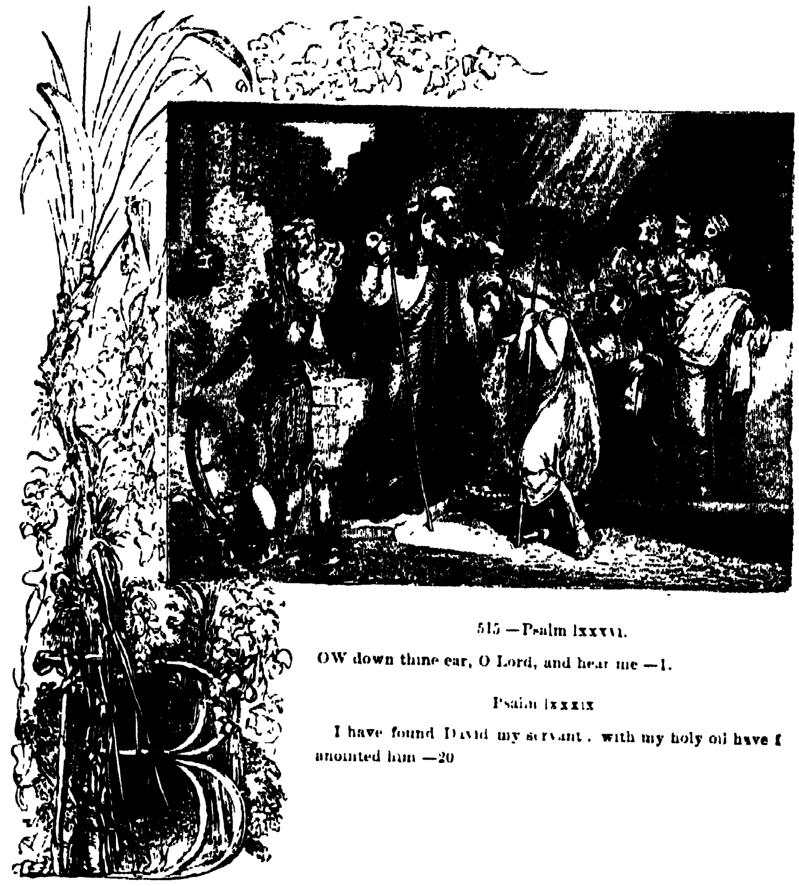
520 – Psalm xc.

ORD, thou hast been my refuge.—1.

Psalm xciv.

They smite down thy people, O Lord and trouble thine heritage.—5.

They murder the widow and the stranger, and put the fatherless to death —6.



515 —Psalm lxxxvi.

OW down thine ear, O Lord, and hear me —1.

Psalm lxxxix

I have found David my servant, with my holy oil have I anointed him —20



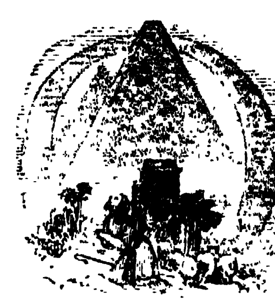
521.– Psalm cxi



516.—Psalm lxxxvii.



522.– Psalm cxii.



517.—Psalm. lxxxviii.



518.—"Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction." (Guido.)—Psalm lxxxviii.
"Fy llygad a ofidiodd gan fy nghystudd."



523.—Psalm xciii.



524.—Psalm xciv.



519.—Psalm. lxxxix.

SUNDAY XXI.—THE PSALMS.

TITLES OF THE PSALMS.

THE word AL, which forms a prefix to many of the titles which form the subject of our present consideration, means *upon*, *after*, or *according to*, and designates the kind of melody, or of accompaniment, or of the key, after which the Psalms were to be sung.

ALAMOTH, "*Virgin*," Psa. xlvi. The word is supposed by many to denote a musical instrument, and they compare it with the Greek *elymos* (ἔλυμος), a species of flute made of box-wood, which was invented by the Phrygians. But some writers on the subject are inclined to refer the titles of this class, which are supposed to denote musical instruments, to the same class as the preceding, and are intended to refer to a melody or tune. Of this opinion is a learned German writer on music, Forkel, who alleges that it is improbable, considering the imperfect state of the Hebrew music, that each song had its separate instrumental accompaniment. He appeals very pertinently to the custom of the German Meister-sängers (master-singers), who give similar titles to their songs, such as *Jungfrau Weiss* (Virgin-mode), *Grund-Weiss*, &c. It is certainly also a weighty objection to the common mode of interpreting these words to denote musical instruments, that in this way we give the Hebrews too many musical instruments—more than we find mentioned elsewhere in the historical books or in the Psalms themselves. Many of the instruments supposed to be thus denoted may, however, have been simply varieties of the common ones, perhaps of the *kinnor*; and where the probabilities are nearly equal, it is the most prudent course to adhere to the general opinion. But in the title now immediately before us, the probabilities are not altogether equal, seeing that, in 1 Chron. xv. 20, this word *alamoth* is connected with the mention of a musical instrument, "psalteries upon alamoth," in such a way as to suggest that it can hardly itself denote an instrument.

AL-TASCHITH, "*Destroy not*," occurs in the titles of Psalms lvii., lviii., lix., lxxv. On this title the same diversity of opinions has been given as on AL-SHAHAR; and in this, as in that, it appears best to regard it as the commencement of the title of some unknown song, to the melody of which the Psalms with this designation were sung.

GITTITH. Psalms viii., lxxxi., lxxxiv. This is usually thought to denote a musical instrument, which perhaps derived its name from the city of Gath-Rimmon, where it may be supposed to have been invented. Others derive the name from the Hebrew word *gath*, "a wine-press," and suppose it was particularly used in the vintage season. We have already stated under *alamoth* that some writers are inclined to regard the titles of this class rather as the names of melodies than of musical instruments. If, however, the general balance of probabilities between these interpretations be equal, there is nothing in the present case to make it incline in favour of the last of them; and we may therefore be content, in the absence of better inform ion, to accept the usual explanation.

JONATH-ELEM-RECHOKIM. Psalm lvi. This singular title, prefixed by the usual *al*, may be translated "*Dove of the distant terebinth trees*." There is nothing in the Psalm itself to suggest a reason for this title, and it is therefore best to understand the words as the commencement of some other song. The interpretation of the words themselves is not, however by any means certain. The Vulgate makes it "*Of the dove of dumbness* (*i. e.* the mute dove), *among strangers*, or *in distant places*," by which David is to be understood. One writer (Knapp) has contrived to make out an application between the title of the Psalm and its contents by translating the former into "On the subjugation of foreign princes." We cannot in this place explain the process by which such very different senses are elicited from the same words, but the difference as it stands will serve to give the reader a lively idea of the obscurities of the subject.

JEDUTHUN. Psalms xxxix., lxii., lxxvii. This is probably the name of the person who was one of David's chief musicians, who is mentioned in 1 Chron. xvi. 41, 42, and xxi. 1. Our translation supposes that this person is himself denoted, and translates the whole phrase in which the name occurs by "To the chief musician, to Jeduthun." But these titles are now more usually understood to refer to his family or to the musical choir of Jeduthun, which is also mentioned at a later period (2 Chron. xxxv. 15; Neh. xi. 17), so that the sense of the whole is "*To the head singers of the Jeduthunites*," or, when singular, "*To the chief musician of the Jeduthunites*."

LEHAZKIR. Psalms xxxviii., lxx. The word means literally, "*for remembrance*," or "*to bring to remembrance*," and is so rendered in the authorized version. The expression is regarded by many as the commencement of some other song to the time of which this was to be adapted. But it is more usually supposed to refer to those sorrows in memory of which David composed the Psalms designated by it, or as implying that Jehovah would remember David and help him.

LAMNATZECHA. This is the word which in the titles to fifty-three of the Psalms is rendered "To the chief musician." Other explanations have been suggested; but it still remains the most probable that it indicates the superintendent of the musical choir, or the head singer. The prefixed *l*, "to," denotes the giving over of the psalm to the chief musician for public exhibition.

MIZMAR. This is the word rendered "Psalm," in a great number of the titles, in such phrases as "a *psalm* of David," "a *psalm* of praise," &c. The word properly denotes a song or poem with a musical accompaniment.

MAHALATH. This occurs in the titles of Psalms liii. and lxxxviii. In the last case it is connected with the word *leannoth*, "for singing," "to be sung," whence it is probable that a musical instrument is denoted, but what instrument is doubtful. According to common opinion it is a sort of flute; but there is no better reason for this than a supposed allusion to something *perforated* involved in the word. In the Ethiopic language there is a word, *mahhlet*, denoting "song," or "psalm," which some take to represent the real signification of this title.

MICHTAM, "*Writing*." Psalms xvi., lvi.—lx. This word is derived by many from the Hebrew word for "gold;" and is hence supposed to denote either a psalm of distinguished excellence, or one written in golden characters, like the Moallakat of the Arabians; and under this view the title is translated "a golden psalm," as in the margin of our Bibles. But the word thus adduced is only a poetical term for gold; and no reason appears why these psalms in particular should be distinguished by this appellation. In the title of Psalm lx. the word stands connected with *le-lammed*, "to teach," and is thus translated "Michtam of David, to teach," which is certainly not remarkably intelligible. This is referred to the Levitical music-masters, who were to teach their choir. But a better application may perhaps be collected from 2 Sam. i. 18, "And David commanded them to teach it (the elegy) to the children of Israel;" and Deut. xxxi. 19, "And teach it (Moses's song) to the children of Israel."

MASCHIL, *Poem*, occurs in the title of thirteen psalms (xxxii., xlii., xliv., xlv., lii.—lv., lxxiv., lxxviii., lxxxviii., lxxxix., cxlii.). The common interpretation, *didactic poem*, does not accord with the character of all the psalms which are thus designated; so that if this were held to be the meaning, we should have to charge the author of the titles with the error of considering some psalms as didactic poems which are not such. However, the fact that the word *maschil* etymologically denotes "understanding," or "intelligence," creates no difficulty in understanding it as a general term for *poem*, seeing that poets were the sages, the learned men of the ancient world; but with more particular reference to this derivation it may denote a poem or song enforcing intelligence, wisdom, piety—which is true of all the psalms to which the word is prefixed, not excepting Psalm xlv., where every thing is referred to the goodness of God (verses 3, 7, 8).

NEGINOTH. Psalms vi., liv., lv., lxxvi. This word is usually supposed to be a general term for every species of stringed instruments; and with the usual prefix *after* or *to* appears to denote "*to the music of stringed instruments*."

NECHILOTH. Psalm v. The word probably denotes an instrument of the flute or pipe kind, and therefore, with the usual prefix, would signify "*to the music of pipes*."

Selah occurs seventy-one times in the Psalms, and three times in Habakkuk, commonly at the end of a strophe: but in Psalms lv. 20; lvii. 4; Hab. iii. 3, 9, in the middle of the verse, although at the end of a member of a verse. Of the various opinions respecting this enigmatical word, all those may at once be set aside which assume that it forms any part of the text, or is in any way connected with the sense. The opinion which regards it as a musical sign is, without doubt, the only correct one. The explanation of this sign is, however, attended with the greatest uncertainty.

SUNDAY XXI.—BIBLE HISTORY.

OBSERVING that it had become necessary for them to reduce the reviving power of the inhabitants, in order to secure what they had already won, the Israelites once more appeared in arms. As they had then no ostensible military leader, they very properly inquired of the Lord, through the high-priest, which of the tribes should take the lead in the warfare. In answer the Divine King was pleased to direct that the numerous and valiant tribe of Judah should take precedence in the army, and in the assault of the enemy; and this was accompanied by the promise of complete success. Accordingly the warriors of Judah, assisted by those of Simeon, attacked the Canaanites and Perizzites, commanded by their king Adonibezek, whom they succeeded in defeating. The loss of the enemy was very heavy. Ten thousand of their host were left dead on the field, and a great number of prisoners were taken, among whom was Adonibezek. This prince had been a great warrior, and had tyrannised severely over his vanquished enemies. Having captured in battle at various times not fewer than seventy of the petty princes who governed in these parts, he had disabled them by cutting off their fingers and great toes, and kept them in humiliating attendance at his court. This fact being notorious, the Israelites now treated the tyrant himself in the same manner. And this act of retaliation doubtless gave satisfaction in the small nations he had oppressed.

After this victory the Israelites marched against Jerusalem, and having carried and taken possession of it, they put the inhabitants to the sword, and set it on fire. Hebron was also at this time captured from the Canaanites, as well as a great many other large towns; and the general result of the war was to put the southern part of the country in substantial possession of the Israelites. At Jerusalem *only* the lower city had been taken, and although the Benjamites took possession of it, as it lay within their boundary, and repaired the damage it had sustained in the war, they allowed *the Jebusites to live in it with them.* This course was also followed in most of the other great towns which were taken; and although it probably arose from their own numbers being insufficient to occupy advantageously all the towns which were taken by them, the intermixture was clearly contrary to the Divine intention, and proved in the end a great snare and danger to the chosen people. They gradually adopted the manners, customs, and abominable practices of the natives with whom they thus mingled, and soon began to adopt their modes of worship and to serve their idols. This was probably under the notion that these were the gods of the country—the native gods,—and as such entitled to homage from all the inhabitants of the land. This idea of local gods was the besetting sin of ancient nations; it is frequently noticed in the Scriptures, and we know that the Israelites themselves were exceedingly prone to this notion. When it did not lead them to the worship of other gods, it led them often to degrade Jehovah himself by unworthy notions of his power and greatness. We see this even in a prophet (Jonah) when he took ship "to flee from the presence of the Lord" (Jon. i 3); and in the constant labour of the prophets to impress upon the minds of the people the universal character of the Divine power and greatness in such passages as—"Am I a God at hand, and not a God afar off? saith the Lord. Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." (Jer. xxiii. 24.)

The downward course which the nation was now taking is exemplified by the historical anecdotes which occupy the last four chapters of the book of Judges, forming a sort of appendix to it, the particulars in which are referred to the times of confusion which followed the death of Joshua and of the elders who survived him. The first of these anecdotes is thus related in the 'Pictorial History of Palestine:'—

"The history of Micah furnishes a very interesting example of the extent to which even Israelites, well disposed in the main, had become familiarized with superstitious and idolatrous practices, and the curious manner in which they managed to make a monstrous and most unseemly alliance between the true doctrine in which they had been brought up, and the erroneous notions which they had imbibed.

"A woman of Ephraim had, through a mistaken zeal, dedicated a large quantity of silver (about five hundred and fifty ounces) to the Lord, intending that her son should make therewith a teraph, in the hope that by this means she might procure to her house the blessings of one who had absolutely forbidden all worship by images. Her son Micah knew not of this sacred appropriation of the money, and took it for the use of the house. But on learning its destination, and hearing his mother lay her curse upon the sacrilegious person by whom she supposed it to have been stolen, he became alarmed, and restored her the silver; and received it again from her with directions to give effect to her intention. This he did. He provided a teraph, and all things necessary to the performance of religious services before it, including vestments for a priest. He set apart one of his own sons as priest, until he should be able to procure a Levite to take that character. He had not long to wait. It would seem that the dues of the Levites were not properly paid at this time; for a young Levite who had lived at Bethlehem felt himself obliged to leave that place and seek elsewhere a subsistence. Happening to call at Micah's house, he gladly accepted that person's offer to remain and act as priest for the recompense of his victuals, and two suits of clothes (one probably sacerdotal), and eleven shekels of silver. Micah was delighted at this completion of his establishment, and, with most marvellous infatuation, cried, 'Now I know Jehovah will bless me, seeing I have a Levite to be my priest.' Things went on tranquilly for a time. But it happened that the tribe of Dan could not get possession of more than the hilly part of its territory, as the Amorites retained the plain, which was the most rich and valuable part. They therefore sought elsewhere an equivalent territory, which might be more easily acquired. Having ascertained that this might be found in the remote, but wealthy and peaceable town and district of Laish, near the sources of the Jordan, a body of six hundred men was sent to get possession of it. From the persons they had previously sent to explore the country, they had heard of Micah's establishment; and so far from manifesting any surprise or indignation, they viewed the matter much in the same light as Micah did himself. They envied him his idol and his priest, and resolved to deprive him of both, and take them to their new settlement. They did so, notwithstanding his protest and outcries; and as for the Levite, he was easily persuaded to prefer the priesthood of a clan to that of a single family. His descendants continued long after to exercise the priestly office, in connection with this idol, at Dan, which was the name the conquerors gave to the town of Laish; and it is lamentable to have to add that there is good reason to suspect that this Levite was no other than a grandson of Moses."

The other of these anecdotes records the atrocious treatment which a Levite and his wife received at Gibeah, in Benjamin. The tribe of Benjamin, when required by the other tribes to give up or punish the offenders, refused to do either, and took arms to resist the evident intention of the others to enforce justice. A most unnatural war ensued, which ended in the all but total extinction of the tribe of Benjamin. That tribe was renowned for its valour and its skill in arms; and there was a body of young men among them who could use both hands alike in the use of the sling, wherewith they could fling stones to a hair's breadth without missing. But all their bravery, all their skill, availed them not against the united host of Israel. Their stout resistance only served to kindle the fierce passions of their opponents, and the end of the war only left six hundred men of the tribe, who had posted themselves among the rocks of Rimmon, and who were spared to prevent the utter extinction of a tribe in Israel.

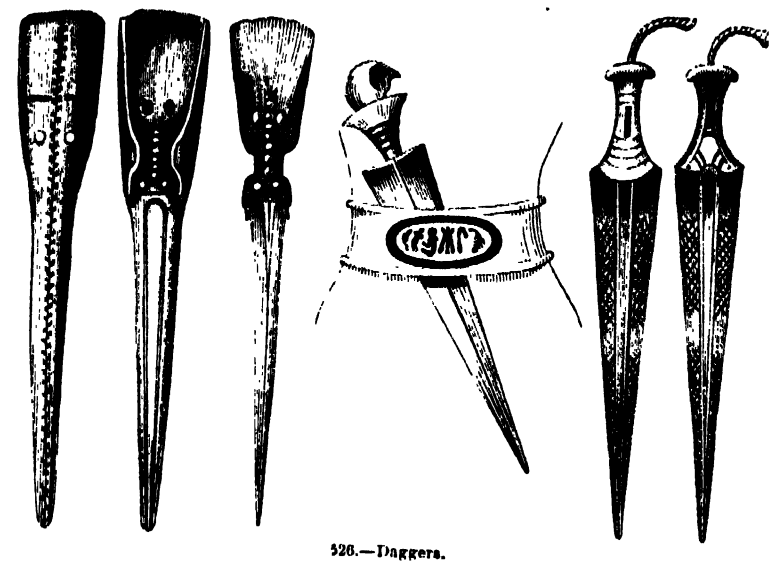
The Hebrew nation still continued its downward course, and turned aside more and more from its mercies and privileges.

For these things the Lord withdrew his protection from the Israelites; and the Canaanites and other neighbouring nations were then enabled to prevail over them, and oppressed them with great severity and rigour. Thus the Book of Judges is filled with the accounts of the oppressions to which they were at intervals subjected, and of the means taken for their deliverance when their repentance had found acceptance with God.

The Canaanites were not the first to discover the weakness which sin had brought upon Israel. Their first subjection was to a king in Mesopotamia named Chushan-rishathaim, who had extended his power to the shores of the Mediterranean, and doubtless subdued other nations besides the Israelites. Very grievously were they for eight years oppressed by this king. Then the people, who had in their prosperity forgotten God, turned to him in supplications; and he heard them, and had mercy upon them, and raised them up a deliverer in the person of Othniel, whose name has already



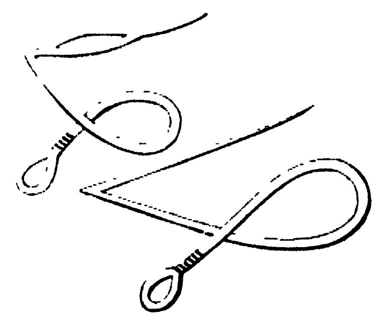
525.—Bethlehem.



526.—Daggers.
Dagerau.



527.—Egyptian Slingers.
Tafledyddion Aiphtaidd.



528.—Slings.
Taflau.



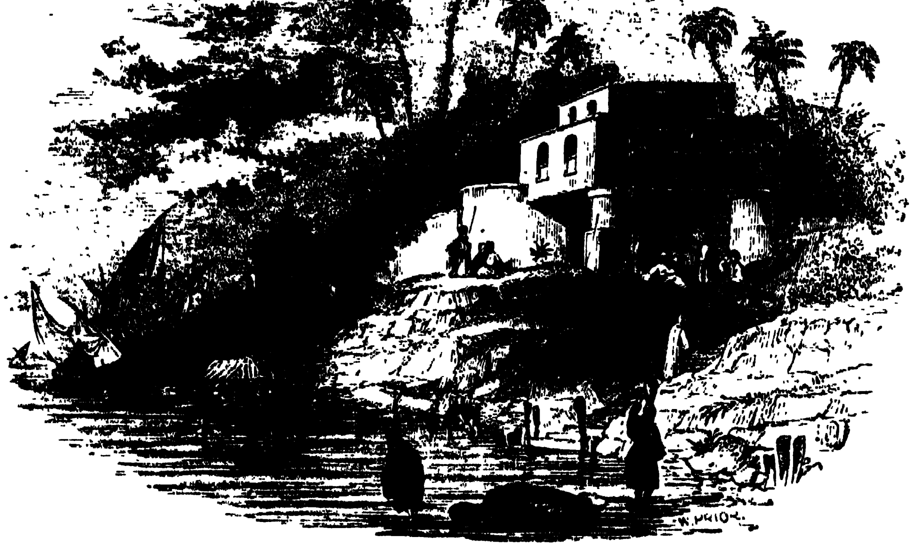
529.—Ox-goad.
Ych-swmbwl.



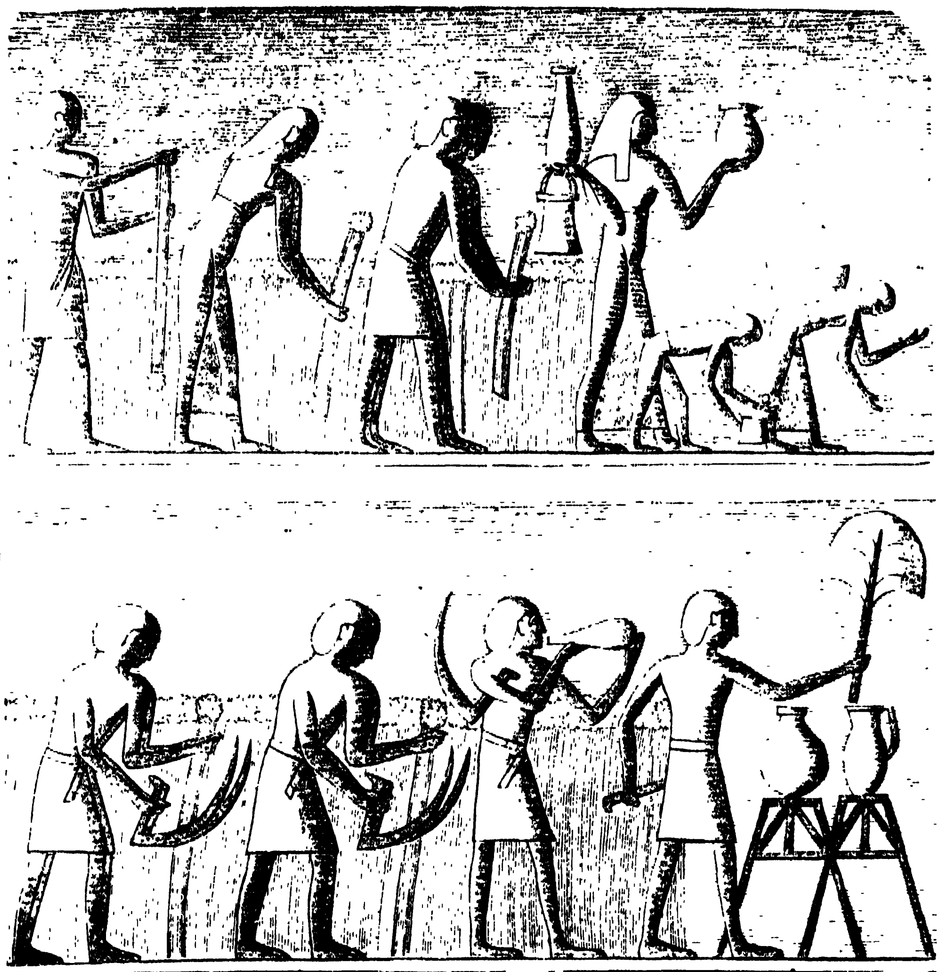
530.—Winnowing Corn in the Threshing-floor.
Nithio Yd yn y Llawr-dyrnu.



531.—Ruth and Naomi. (Bird.)—Ruth i.
Ruth a Naomi.



532.—Summer Parlour on the Nile.
Parlwr Haf ar y Nilus.



534.—Harvest.
Cynhauaf.



533.—Boaz and Ruth. (Stothard.)—Ruth iii.
Boaz a Ruth.



535.—Binding Sheaves.
Rhwymo Ysgubau.



536.—Dancing Woman of Cairo.
Dawns-wraig Cairo.



537.—Hood-veil of an Arab Woman.
Hug-orchudd Benyw Arabaidd.



538.—In-door dress of a Modern Egyptian Lady.
Gwisg dy Boneddiges Aiphtaidd Ddiweddar.



539.—Black Veil.
Cuddlen Ddu.



540.—Woman wearing the Tob.
Gwraig yn gwisgo'r Tob.

occurred as the nephew, on whom Caleb bestowed his daughter for taking the strong town of Debir. Having succeeded in expelling the Mesopotamians from the land of Israel, Othniel by this act acquired such influence, that his instructions and advice continued afterwards to be followed; and he thus became the first of those governors called "Judges," who exercised authority more by the weight of their character and services than by formal conditions, and who derived their name from the circumstance that in the East all power, when it is not purely military nor purely sacerdotal, resolves itself into the administration of justice.

During the administration of Othniel, which continued during forty years, the nation prospered, for it remained substantially faithful to its God and King, and followed his laws and ordinances. But when the salutary control which this judge had exercised had ceased, the people gradually relapsed into idolatry and crime, and new afflictions became necessary for them.

The Moabites this time became the instruments of their punishment. The feelings towards the Israelites which had been manifested in the time of Balak still existed and had gathered strength. The existing king, Eglon, formed an alliance with the Ammonites, and with the old enemies of Israel the Amalekites, who seem to have been never backward in taking part in any design against the Hebrews. Having succeeded in reducing the tribes east of the Jordan by this assistance, Eglon carried his arms west of the river. He subdued the tribes in occupation of the south without much difficulty, and made Jericho the seat of his government on that side of the river. The Israelites had now a master among themselves, whose yoke must have been far less tolerable than that to which they had before been subject. To Jericho the subjugated tribes were obliged to bring their "presents," or the periodical tribute which the conqueror had imposed, and which seems to have been so heavy as to drain the wealth of the nation. Jericho was in the tribe of Benjamin, which was, therefore, in all probability more immediately distressed by the presence of the Moabitish court than any of the other tribes in southern Palestine. We are, therefore, not surprised to find that a Benjamite became the next deliverer of the people, after they had for eighteen years groaned beneath the yoke of Moab; the name of this deliverer was Ehud, who, having been chosen to convey the customary tribute to Eglon, thought to avail himself of the opportunity of wreaking vengeance upon the tyrant for all the wrongs he had done to Israel. The course which he adopted was nothing short of murder, and although the end was good, that does not justify the means, seeing that Scripture forbids us to do evil that good may come. He concealed a dagger beneath his garment, and having in a public audience delivered his "presents," he requested the favour of a private audience with the king, who, unsuspicious of harm, ordered his attendants to withdraw. Ehud then approached him, as if to deliver his secret message, saying, "I have a message from God unto thee." On hearing this the king arose from his seat to receive such a message with becoming respect; and in the act of rising received the thrust of Ehud's dagger, and fell dead upon the floor. This transaction took place in "the summer parlour," which is always in the outer part of the house or palace; and Ehud was thus enabled to withdraw unperceived, locking the door after him upon the dead body of the king. The attendants supposed that Eglon had locked himself in to enjoy his siesta, and waited so long before they durst procure another key to open the door, that the assassin was far away, and the country roused, before they knew what had happened. That no time might be lost in taking advantage of his deed, Ehud hastily collected an army of ten thousand men, and attacked the Moabites in the very height of the consternation into which they had been thrown by the discovery of the death of their king. They were thus easily defeated, and a long time elapsed before they were again in a condition to disturb the Israelites.

After this, the Israelites enjoyed a long period—eighty years—of peace and safety terminating B.C. 1426, being 182 years after the passage of the Jordan. It was towards the end of this period that the Philistines, afterwards so conspicuous in the sacred history, made their first appearance in the field as the enemies of Israel. But it was probably in this instance little more than a border foray; for the party was put to the rout by a body of husbandmen armed with their implements, and led by Shamgar, whose own weapon was an ox-goad.

It is also in this interval that we are to place the history of Ruth and Naomi, which forms so refreshing an episode in the accounts of sin, strife, and war, which form the bulk of the history of this period. It is a domestic history, and the only one which is given with the same degree of detail in all the Scripture. It thus affords a most interesting picture of the private life of the Hebrews of a remote time, to which the abundant touches of natural sentiment, true feeling, and unaffected piety impart that peculiar charm which is felt by every reader.

It relates that during a famine in the land of Israel, a man of Bethlehem, named Elimelech, went to sojourn in Moab with his wife Naomi and his two sons. During their stay in that country the father died, and the widow was left with her sons, whom in due time she married to two damsels of Moab, one named Orpah, and the other Ruth. Ere long her sons died also, and she was left with her two daughters-in-law. By this time the famine had ceased in Israel, and Naomi resolved to return to her own people. Orpah and Ruth proposed to go with her; but she resisted, and urged them to remain in their own country, and among their own friends. Orpah yielded, and went to her friends; but Ruth was not to be moved. She said:—"Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me." Naomi could not resist this, and they returned to Bethlehem together.

Naomi was full of painful thoughts on returning to the place as a lone widow, which some years before she had quitted strong in her husband and hopeful in her two sons. The memory of her good name still however lingered in Bethlehem, and when she appeared in its streets people asked, "Is this Naomi?" to which in the re-awakened anguish of her soul she answered, "Call me not Naomi (*pleasant*), but call me Mara (*bitter*), for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full: and the Lord hath brought me home again empty. Why then call ye me Naomi?"

The return was in spring, about the beginning of the barley harvest; and as soon as they were a little settled, Ruth went forth to glean in the fields. The harvest field to which, by the kind providence of God, this fair stranger was conducted, belonged to a pious, kind, and wealthy land-owner called Boaz. Her story had become well known in the place; and her generous and faithful conduct had, unknown to her, invested her with a kind of sacredness in the eyes of the good people of Bethlehem, and won for her their respect and love wherever she appeared. Hence the overseer readily gave her permission to glean in the field; and when the owner himself came, and was told who the strange-looking damsel was, he spoke kindly to her, and told her not to seek any other place for gleaning, but to keep fast by his maidens, and partake freely of the victuals which he had provided for his reapers. Astonished at this kindness she bowed herself very low before him, and said, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" He then told her the good report he had heard of her conduct to Naomi, and added, "A full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust." Overcome by finding so much kindness among strangers, Ruth answered, "Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me; and for that thou hast spoken friendly to thine handmaid, though I be not like one of thine handmaidens."

Not content with this, Boaz strictly enjoined his people to treat the damsel with respect, and privately told the reapers to drop some of their corn purposely for her to gather up.

Thus favoured, poor Ruth throve well in her gleaning; and when in the evening she beat out that which she had gleaned, it made little less than a bushel of barley. This extraordinary success attracted the attention and inquiries of Naomi, who, when she heard the name of Boaz, recognised his nearness of kin, and advised Ruth to glean only in his grounds. When the harvest was over, the mother-in-law, in her care for the damsel's welfare, became aware of the duties which she owed to the childless house of her husband. By the Hebrew law it was the duty of the next of kin to marry the widow of one who died childless, that the first-born of the marriage might succeed to the estate, and be counted as the son of the deceased. Under this law Naomi conceived that it was the duty of Boaz to make Ruth his wife, and in that case it was her own duty to the deceased to claim that he should do so. The threshing in the open air threshing-floor followed the reaping, and Naomi knew that Boaz reposed at night beside the heap of threshed corn in that place. Thither she advised Ruth to go, and to claim "that he should throw his skirt over her," and by that action avow his intention to take up the obligations which devolved upon him.



SUNDAY XXI.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

THERE was soon another opportunity for our Lord to enter a practical protest against the notions concerning the Sabbath which in his time were entertained. He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath day, when he noticed the presence of a woman who was doubled up by a disease under which she had been suffering for eighteen years. He called the afflicted creature before him, and when he laid his sacred hands upon her, her bent body became straight, and she glorified God. The ruler of the synagogue was filled with indignation by this act, which he regarded as a profanation of the holy day; and he said to the people, "There are six days on which men ought to work: in them, therefore, come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day." The severe answer of the benevolent Saviour rebuked him for thinking it a matter of small importance that the afflicted should be relieved one day sooner from their sorrows. "Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath day loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to the watering; and ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" No one could answer this.

Soon after, our Lord took occasion to compare the small beginnings and eventual extension of "the kingdom of God," meaning the church, to a grain of mustard-seed, "which a man took and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree, and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it." He again compared it to leaven, "which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened." These familiar comparisons, certain to be remembered, were prophetic in their purport, and would be called to mind with much interest, when the result which they indicate had been realized—when the seed became a great tree, and when the morsel had leavened the whole mass.

It was probably on the next Sabbath that Christ dined in the house of a Pharisee, and took notice of the manifest anxiety of the guests to secure the most honourable places. This is, at the present day, a matter of vast solicitude and importance among the Orientals, the rank and estimation of a man being determined by the place which he occupies; and that among the Jews there were frequent disputes about seats at a banquet, we learn from Josephus and the Rabbinical writers. Jesus, with the freedom which belonged to his character and office, reprehended this practice, and proceeded to inculcate the superior merits of those who feasted the afflicted and needy, over those who bestowed their feasts only on those from whom they expected a corresponding return. He does not in this prohibit the reciprocation of hospitality among the rich; but he prefers the acts of beneficence which are performed without the hope of reward. Some one on this remarked, "Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God," by which he probably intended to express the blessedness of those who should live in the kingdom which he believed the Messiah was to establish on the earth. To this Jesus replied in the striking parable of the Great Supper, the obvious intention of which is to reprove the prejudices which, from notions of secular felicity and grandeur, the nation in general entertained on this subject, in consequence of which, that which they, in prospect, regarded as a period so full of blessing to themselves, would, when present, be exceedingly neglected and despised. The parable describes a person as making a good supper to which a large number of friends were invited. When all things were ready, the servants were, according to custom, sent to *call* the persons previously invited. But they all excused themselves on one ground or another. One said he had bought (conditionally) a piece of ground, and must needs go and see it; and another, that he had bought five yoke of oxen, and must go and prove them. These excuses allude to a custom of proving articles during a treaty for their purchase. Another alleged that he had "married a wife, and therefore could not come." These excuses might be very good separately taken, and on their own merits; but agreement among all the guests to excuse themselves showed much disrespect for the host, and a disposition to undervalue him and the feast which he had provided. And thus he felt it; for he was wroth, and commanded his servants to bring in from the streets and highways the destitute, the afflicted, the poor, and the miserable, that *they* might enjoy the feast which the invited guests had refused. The application of this parable, under the considerations which have been indicated, is obvious, and must have been exceedingly galling to the auditors.

Not long after this, Christ, finding that he had incurred the blameful sneers of the Pharisees, on account of the number of "publicans and sinners" who flocked to hear him, explained and justified his conduct in several striking parables. In the first, he describes a man possessing a flock of a hundred sheep, and when one of them has gone astray, proceeds in search of it, and when it was found, lays it on his shoulders (after a custom of the Jewish shepherds which is still common in the East), and returns home exulting more in the one sheep he had recovered than in the ninety and nine which he had not lost.

The next parable has the same scope. In it a woman possessed of ten pieces of silver loses one of them, and proceeds to light a candle, and sweeps the house, searching diligently till she has found it; and when it is found, rejoicing more in that one piece than in the possession of the nine which had not been lost.

The parable of the Prodigal Son, which next follows, has the same general purport with the others, teaching that God would have no one perish, but willingly receives those who repent of their sins, and grants them his forgiveness. In this beautiful parable, which has all the air of a fact from common life, and which might easily be such, our Lord represents a wealthy landholder having two sons. The younger of them, full of animal spirits, and impatient of the restraints of his father's house, obtains from him his share of the patrimony, and hastens away to a distant place, where he may take his full of sensual pleasures without notice or control. Soon, all his ample means were wasted in riotous living, "and he began to be in want." At the same time a famine arose in the land; the gay companions of his pleasures departed from him, and he had no resource but to hire himself out as a swineherd to "a citizen of that country." The famine made provisions scarce and dear, and his employment kept not from him the pangs of hunger, so that very often he would fain have appeased his appetite with the coarse fruits of the carob-tree, which were given to his hogs, and which none but the poorest of human beings eat.

Thus degraded, thus miserable, the youth at length "came to himself," for he had been morally insane before: and then he thought of the blessings of his father's house, the hired servants in which had bread enough and to spare, while he was perishing with hunger. This brought him to the resolution—"I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants."

He did as he had said. When he drew nigh to his father's house, he doubtless considered much of the manner in which he should make his approach: but he needed not; for his father, with the true instinct of paternal love, knew the wretched prodigal "while he was yet a great way off;" and he was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him. The son began to confess his unworthiness; but the only answer of the father was to tell his servants, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

In the height of their rejoicing, the elder brother [representing the Pharisees] came in from the fields; and when he understood the cause of this unwonted gladness, he was offended and would not enter the house; and when his father came out to him he complained that, while his faithful services and steady conduct had obtained no reward, no sooner did his wasteful brother return than the fatted calf had been killed for him. The glad father answered, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."

Jesus then addressed more particularly to his own disciples, many of whom were wealthy, the parable of the Unjust Steward, with the view of inculcating the true use of riches, and how they might be employed so as to ensure advantage from them in a future state. As, however, the parable describes a dishonest contrivance of the steward to gratify his lord's debtors at his expense, that they might thereby be induced to support him when dismissed from his stewardship; the moral, or application, is to be adduced, not from the act itself, which was culpable, but from the anxiety which the man felt to make his present means available for his future good.



541.—Christ eating with the Pharisee.
Crist yn bwyta gyda'r Pharisead.



542.—Parable of the Supper.
Dammeg y Swper.



543.—Mustard.



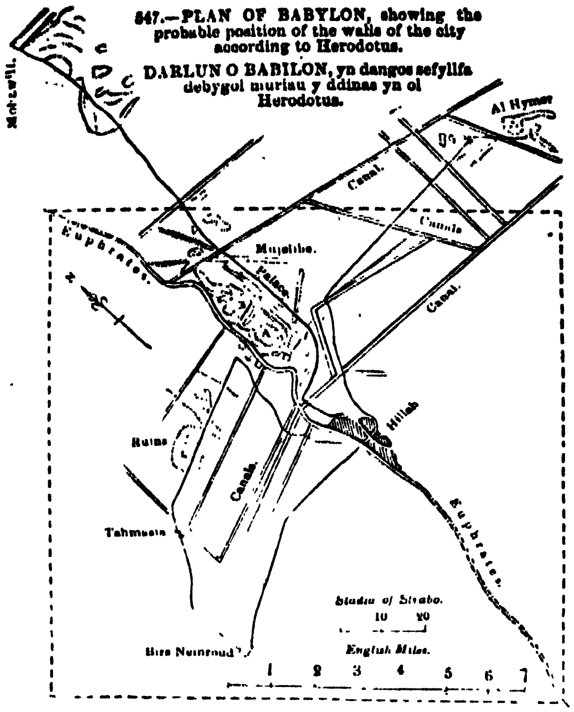
545.—Prodigal Son. (Salvator Rosa.)
Y Mab Afradlon



544.—Searching for Leaven.
Chwilio am Surdoes.

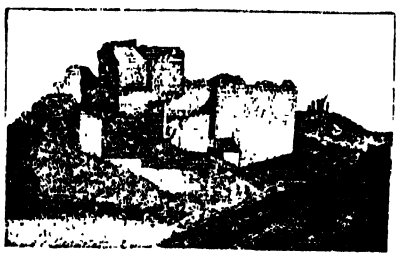


546.—Carob-tree.
Y Pren Carob.



547.—PLAN OF BABYLON, showing the probable position of the walls of the city according to Herodotus.

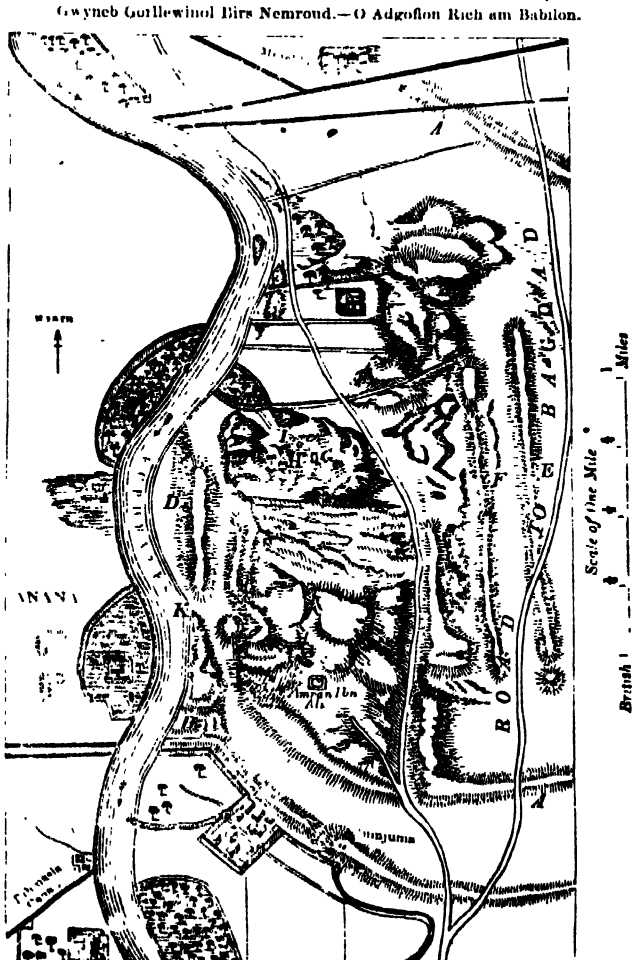
DARLUN O BABILON, yn dangos sefyllfa debygol muriau y ddinas yn ol Herodotus.



552.—North face of the Kasr.—From Rich's Memoir on Babylon.
Gwyneb Gogleddol y Casr.—O Adgofion Rich am Babilon.



553.—West face of the Birs Nemroud.—From Rich's Memoir on Babylon.
Gwyneb Gorllewinol Birs Nemroud.—O Adgofion Rich am Babilon.



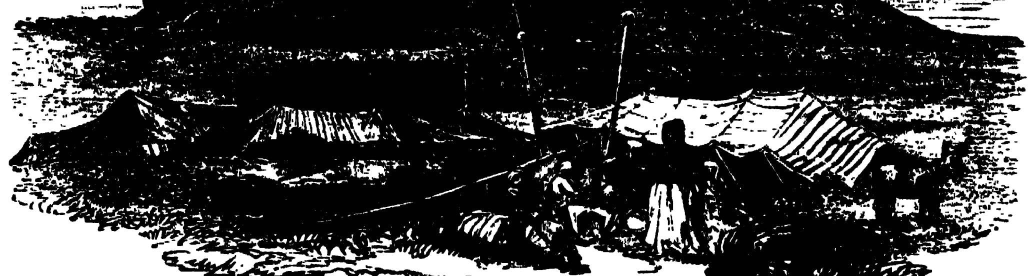
548.—Plan of Babylon.—From Rich's Memoir on Babylon.
Darlun o Babilon.—O Adgofion Rich am Babilon.



549.—Babylon.—Birs Nemroud, &c.



550.—Babylon.—The Inundation.
Babilon.—Y Gorlifiad.



551.—Babylon.—The Mujelibe, &c.

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SUNDAY XXII.—THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.

BABYLON.

It is remarked by Dr. Keith that "If there ever was a city that seemed to bid defiance to any predictions of its fall, that city was Babylon. It was for a long time the most famous city in the world. Its walls, which were reckoned among the wonders of the world, appeared rather like the bulwarks of nature than the workmanship of man. The temple of Belus, half a mile in circumference, and a furlong in height—the hanging gardens, which, piled in successive terraces, towered as high as the walls—the embankments which restrained the Euphrates—the hundred brazen gates, and the adjoining artificial lake, all displayed many of the mightiest works of mortals concentrated in a single spot. Yet, while in the plenitude of its power, and, according to the most accurate chronologers, one hundred and sixty years before the foot of an enemy had entered it, the voice of prophecy pronounced the doom of the mighty and unconquered Babylon. A succession of ages brought it gradually to the dust; and the gradation of its fall is marked, till it sank at last into utter desolation. At a time when nothing but magnificence was around Babylon the great, fallen Babylon was delineated exactly as every traveller now describes it in ruins."

Among the prophecies thus referred to, those of Jeremiah are remarkably pointed and significant, and the present page may be profitably occupied upon them; although, as already intimated, we are by no means prepared to go the lengths of Dr. Keith, and those who follow him, in upholding the literal interpretation of every minute detail in what we believe to have been intended as a general and suggestive picture of the city under desolation, particularized and distinguished by references to the topography of the great city, to the aspects which the more marked features of the scene must necessarily present under the given circumstances. Being such as Babylon was known to be, the circumstances introduced to heighten the picture of its desolation are such as must have accrued, if the "golden city" ever did become desolate. In this point of view, the prophecies become the object of undiminished interest and admiration; while the danger of unduly pressing upon the minute details of a poetical picture is avoided.

The prophecies of Jeremiah against Babylon occupy the fiftieth and fifty-first chapters. He begins by clearly indicating the source of the destruction which should come upon Babylon—from the north (li. 3); and then by him, as well as by Isaiah, the Medes and Persians are mentioned by *name* (li. 11). This is a very remarkable circumstance—one concerning which there can be no doubt or questionable interpretation, and, therefore, of much more real consequence than the topographical intimations of uncertain application, to which so much attention has of late years been directed. Babylon, as the prophets had foretold, was besieged by the Medes and Persians under Cyrus the Persian, who was the son-in-law of the king of the Medes.

In another place, even the time of the reduction of Babylon is marked out by the prophet (xxv. 11, 12), where it is said that the subject nations should serve the king of Babylon *seventy* years, and that then the Babylonian empire should receive its punishment. Accordingly there were just seventy years from the fourth year of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, which was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, to the taking of Babylon by Cyrus and the restoration of the Jews.

It was foretold by Isaiah that the reduction of Babylon should be effected by an assemblage of various nations (Isa. xiii. 4); and Jeremiah even names the nations composing this assemblage. He had already named the Medes and Persians as the chief parties in the transaction, and afterwards he adds (li. 27), "Prepare the kingdoms against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz;" these names denote the Armenians, Phrygians, and other nations: and, accordingly, the army of Cyrus was composed of various nations, and among them were those very people whom he had conquered before, and now obliged to attend him in this expedition.

A very singular circumstance, impossible for any human foresight to have reckoned upon, occurred during the siege of Babylon, and was most pointedly mentioned by the prophets. It was, that the river should be dried up before the city should be taken: "A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up" (Jer. l. 38); "I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry" (li. 36). This, as Bishop Newton remarks, was most unlikely ever to happen, the river being two furlongs broad, and deeper than two men standing upon one another, so that the city was thought to be better fortified by the river than by the walls. But so it was, that Cyrus turned the course of the river Euphrates, which ran through the midst of Babylon, and, by means of deep trenches and canals, so drained the waters, that the river became easily fordable for his soldiers to enter the city. It was by this means that the mighty Babylon, which was deemed impregnable, and was supplied with provisions for many years, was most unexpectedly taken.

It is not a little singular that the capture of Babylon should be described as involving the destruction of its idols. "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground" (Isa. xxi. 9). "Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon their beasts, and upon their cattle," &c. (Jer. l. 2). There are other prophecies to the same effect. Now the Persians, by whom Babylon was taken and retained, detested idolatry nearly as much as did the Jews themselves, and destroyed the idols of the places they conquered, when not restrained by prudential considerations. What was actually done in this respect, history does not state. We know that Cyrus readily gave up the spoils of the temple of Jerusalem, although they had been consecrated to the god Bel: and some years after Xerxes plundered and destroyed the temples and idols of "the great city." This he did from professed hostility to image worship, for which he was indeed notorious; but partly to reimburse himself for the vast expenses of his wars by the precious metals of which their idols were composed, or with which they were covered. It will be remembered that the image which Nebuchadnezzar set up was of gold.

With equal minuteness and precision, by prophetic vision, it was foretold that this great event, the capture of Babylon, should take place during a feast (Jer. l. 24; li. 39, 57). And this also came to pass: for the city was taken in the night of a great annual festival, while the inhabitants were dancing, drinking, and revelling, so that the extreme parts of this vast city were already in the hands of the enemy before those who dwelt in the central parts were aware of their danger.

But although taken by an enemy, the human probabilities were that a town so great, so advantageously situated for the seat of a great empire, would only sustain a temporary shock from such a calamity; and would then, under its new masters, recover its strength and greatness. This has happened to other great cities of the East and West, and why might it not happen to Babylon? How but through Divine inspiration could the prophets know that Babylon should become desolate and utterly forsaken, and that man and beast should remove from it? (Jer. l. 3.) It did so happen, however. The conquerors had a city of their own not very far off, and much more conveniently situated, with regard to their native dominions, as the seat of empire; and although for a time they made it the residence of the court during a part of every year, Susa, the Shusan of Scripture, on the river Tigris, became the real capital of the empire. This was a sore blow to the prosperity of Babylon; and when Alexander conquered the East, it was no longer the mighty city which it had been when the prophets gave forth their denunciations against it. It was still, however, great; and the Macedonian conqueror contemplated making it the central seat of his vast empire. But the downward doom of Babylon was sealed in the counsels of heaven, and the hero, in the midst of his magnificent projects, died there, and his empire was divided.

Still, one might have supposed Babylon a very suitable metropolis for that great eastern portion of this empire which fell to the lot of the Seleucidæ. But they were more fond of residing in the western than in the eastern part of their dominions, and Antioch was the real metropolis of their empire. Babylon was not even allowed the equivocal rank of their eastern metropolis. This rank was given to a new city, founded on the Tigris, and called Seleucus, to aggrandize which Babylon was impoverished, and to people which Babylon was depopulated. The new town formed a constant drain to Babylon, taking away year after year the more useful inhabitants, who found themselves in a much better condition at Seleucus; so that in the course of time only the poorer sort of people were left, and they too at length abandoned the place to the wandering Arabs, and to the beasts of the field not more wild than they. The Arab in his turn has left the blasted land, leaving the beasts of prey, and birds which love the water, and they few in number, the sole possessors of "the lady of kingdoms."

SUNDAY XXII.—BIBLE HISTORY.

ACCORDINGLY she went, wrapped up in one of those ample veils which women still wear in the East. Boaz hesitated at a requisition made so unexpectedly, and at such a time and place; but his hesitation arose from the knowledge that there was a nearer kinsman on whom the duty and claim in the first place devolved. This he told her; but spoke kindly to her, and said that, if the other person declined to perform the part of a kinsman to her, he would do so, "for (he added) all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman."

That very day Boaz repaired to the gate, where in those days most public and judicial business was transacted, on account of the facilities offered by the constant passage of the inhabitants between the town and the neighbouring fields. He had not waited long before the nearer kinsman of whom he had spoken passed by, and he called to him, and, in the presence of the elders of the city, laid the matter before him as a question respecting the right of redeeming a piece of land to be sold by Naomi. The kinsman was willing to this extent to perform the legal duty which devolved upon him; but when it was further explained that it involved the necessity of marrying Ruth, as the widow of the deceased heir, he drew back, saying, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it." Then, to indicate the transfer of his right, he took off his sandal and gave it to Boaz, which, being done in the presence of witnesses specially called upon to notice the act, constituted a binding and legal act of transfer. It is thought that the person who received the shoe preserved it in record of the transaction; and it is possibly from this custom, or another of similar meaning, that a person who has taken the place which had belonged to another is said to stand in his shoes.

This mention of sandals affords us occasion to remark that the word translated shoe, in our authorized version of the Scriptures, must generally be understood to denote sandals. We are not, however, to infer that shoes, or rather slippers and buskins, were altogether unknown; but such were more common in the times of the New Testament than of the Old, and were more used by foreigners than by native Jews. But in those later times, when Jews from all lands repaired to Jerusalem at the different festivals, it is probable that sandals, shoes, and buskins of most of the ancient forms represented in the engraving were seen in the streets of Jerusalem.

This obstacle being happily surmounted, Ruth became the wife of Boaz. The first-born son, named Obed, from whom sprang Jesse, the father of David, was considered as the grandson of Naomi, and her neighbours accordingly congratulated her:—"Blessed be the Lord, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age; for thy daughter-in-law, who loveth thee, who is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him."

Towards the end of the long interval of eighty years, during which these incidents occurred, the Israelites again fell into evil courses, and were again brought under punishment.

Jabin, king of Hazor, in the north of Palestine, a son of that Jabin against whom Joshua had fought, had been by this time enabled to restore the ruined kingdom to something of its former power. His dominion was paramount in the north, and he had no difficulty in bringing the Israelites under his yoke, which they bore without resistance during forty years. The weight of their affliction at length brought them back to the God of their fathers, and they cried to him for deliverance. The deliverance for which they cried came from a quarter most unexpected. There was a woman named Deborah, celebrated for her piety and wisdom, who had probably been considerably instrumental in bringing about the recent reformation, and who was so highly esteemed by the people, that they brought their differences to her for decision, so that she is said to have judged Israel. Her dwelling was under the palm-tree between Ramah and Bethel, afterwards known as "Deborah's palm-tree."

To this woman the mission of deliverance came; and as she could not herself take the field, she called Barak, of the tribe of Naphtali, to take the command of the troops, which he was instructed to raise, to the number of ten thousand men. Assurances of victory were also given to him; but when we consider the well-compacted power of Jabin, and his mighty army, commanded by Sisera, the most renowned general of his age, and containing chariots of war, which were always greatly dreaded by the Israelites, it is not wonderful that Barak somewhat quailed at this undertaking, and that he consented only on the condition that Deborah should go with him, and support him by her presence in the attempt to raise the forces required for this service. She willingly consented, although not without a gentle rebuke for the deficiency of his faith. With great difficulty Barak succeeded in getting together a small army, with which he encamped on Mount Tabor. Jabin was not slow in taking notice of this transaction, and soon his fine army, under the command of Sisera, poured into the plain of Esdraelon, where their vast numbers and gallant array were fully displayed before the comparatively small band upon Mount Tabor. Nevertheless, encouraged by the promises of Divine support, the Hebrew troop, at the word from Deborah, went down from the mountain into the plain to give the enemy battle. This bold movement seems to have been made instrumental in putting the Canaanites into a panic, and they were soon put to utter rout and fled across the plain. Their course was stopped by the river Kishon, which is in its season a mighty torrent, although usually an inconsiderable stream. Here vast numbers of them were swept away and drowned in the attempt to cross, and the ruin of Jabin's proud army was complete.

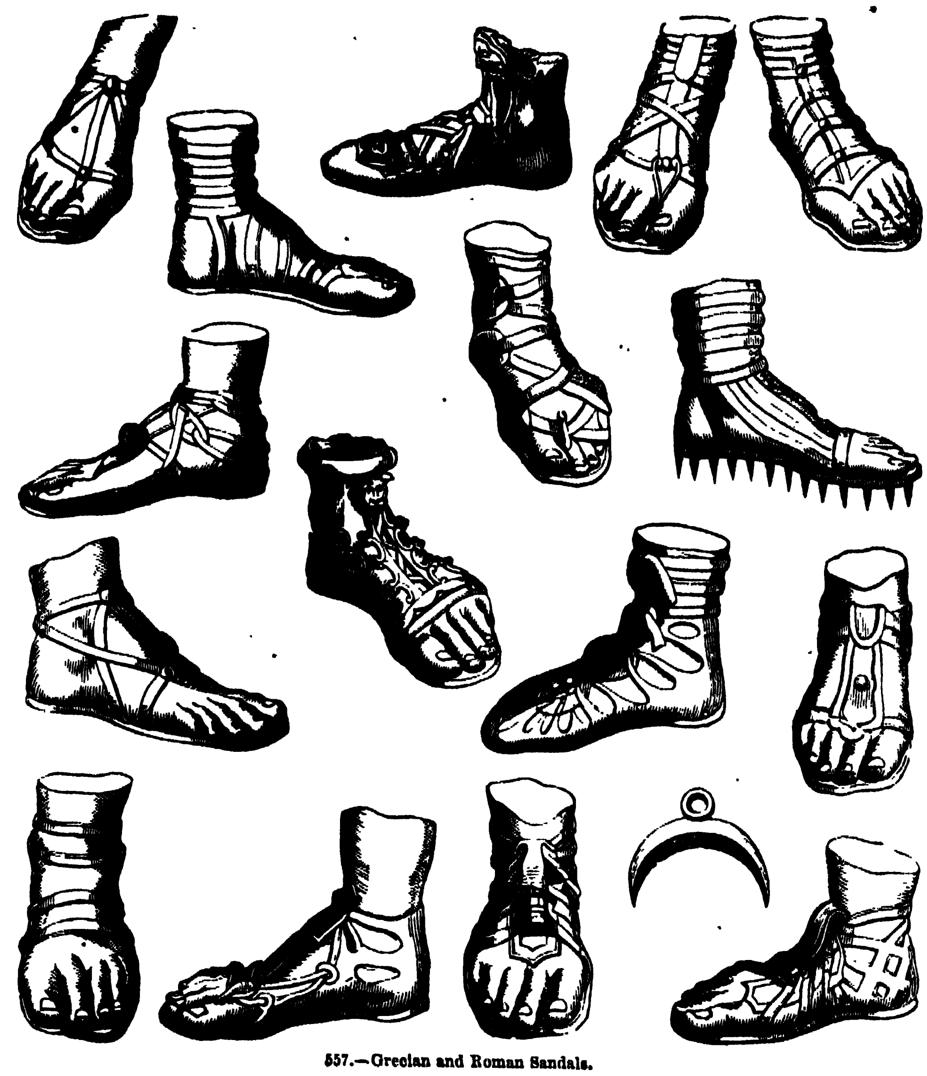
Sisera himself escaped from the field of battle in his chariot; but being hard pressed by his pursuers, and being aware that their attention would be directed to his chariot, he alighted from it, and pursued his way on foot. In this way he at length reached the tents of a nomade family, which had separated itself from the Kenites, who occupied pasture-grounds in different parts of Palestine. This section of the tribe had for its chief Heber, who appears to have been a descendant of Jethro, who entered the land with the Israelites. Sisera knew that they were not identified with the Israelites, and that there was peace between his sovereign and the house of Heber. He therefore applied at the tent of the chief for concealment and protection. This, according to the notions of a nomade people, could not be well refused even to an enemy, much less to a friend: and although the chief himself was from home, his wife Jael even went out to meet Sisera, saying, "Turn in, my lord, turn in to me; fear not." She took him to the inner part of the tent, where none might suddenly enter, and covered him with a cloak, that he might sleep. He called to her, "Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink; for I am thirsty;" and she opened a bottle of milk (probably soured camel's milk), and gave him some of that refreshing drink, instead of water. He then slept.

There seems no good reason to distrust the sincerity of Jael's hospitality thus far. But, as the general lay asleep before her, many thoughts must have crossed her mind. The peace and safety of a tribe, placed as hers was among settled nations, seemed to depend on its standing well with the most powerful of these nations; it was at this time clear that the power of Jabin was destroyed, and that it had become far more important to conciliate the Israelites than to care for him. They would certainly not be conciliated, but grievously offended, to the great danger of the family of Heber, if their great enemy were found comforted and sheltered in the chief's own tent. And found he would be. The pursuers could not but know that he must have passed that way; and, being aware that the camp was under the protection of Jabin, they would scarcely take her word for the fact that he was not concealed in the tent. No: the fate of Sisera was inevitable, and it was more than probable that the house of Heber would perish with him. But then, by anticipating the stroke, it would be in her power, without any real injury to Sisera, not only to avert all evil from the house of Heber, but to make the now powerful Israelites its firmest friends: and their disappointment at not having themselves secured the prey would be more than compensated by the new dishonour to their enemy, of dying by a woman's stroke. There can be little mistake in attributing to Jael the influence of such considerations, when she determined that the sleeping general of Jabin's host should die by her hand. The act itself she accomplished by driving into his temple, with a mallet, one of the strong nails by which the tent-cords were fastened to the ground.

He was scarcely dead when the pursuers arrived, headed by Barak himself—the commander in those ancient wars being usually solicitous of taking or slaying the opposing general with his own hand. Jael went forth to meet them, and accosted Barak with "Come, and I will shew thee the man whom thou seekest." He then went with her into the tent, and beheld the redoubtable enemy of Israel lying dead, with the tent-nail in his temples; and



554.—The Marriage.
Y Briodas.



557.—Grecian and Roman Sandals.
Sandalau Groegaidd a Rhufeinaidd.



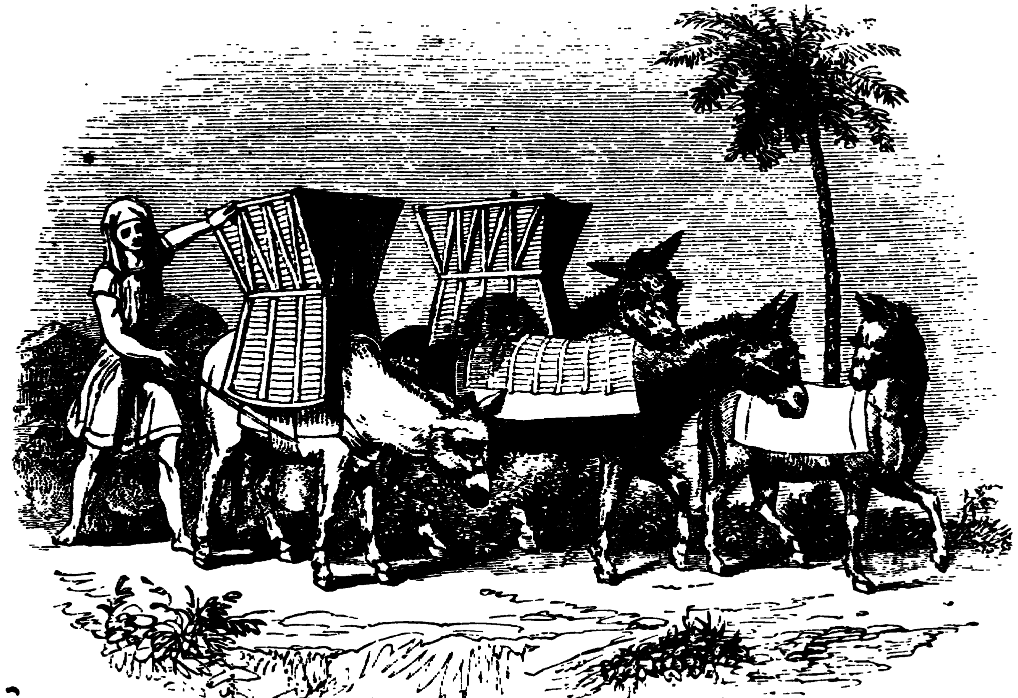
555.—Lady of Modern Egypt, with the common Face-Veil, and one form of the Walking Wrapper.
Boneddiges Aiphtaidd Ddiweddar â Gwyneb-orchudd, ac un ffurf o'r Amorchudd Teithio.



558.—Ancient Shoes and Sandals.
a, b, c, Egyptian; *d, e, f, g, h, i*, Persian; *k*, Asiatic; *l, n*, Phrygian; *m, q, r, s*, Dacian; *o, p*, Grecian.
Hen Esgidiau a Sandalau.
a, b, c, Aiphtaidd; *d, e, f, g, h, i*, Persiaidd; *k*, Asiaidd; *l, n*, Phrygiaidd; *m, q, r, s*, Daciaidd; *o, p*, Groegaidd.



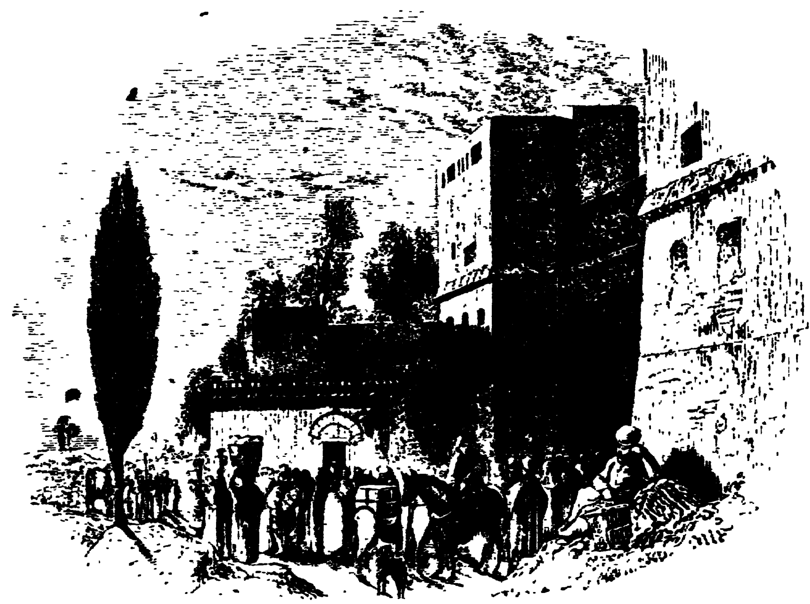
556.—Walking Wrapper.
Amorchudd Teithio.



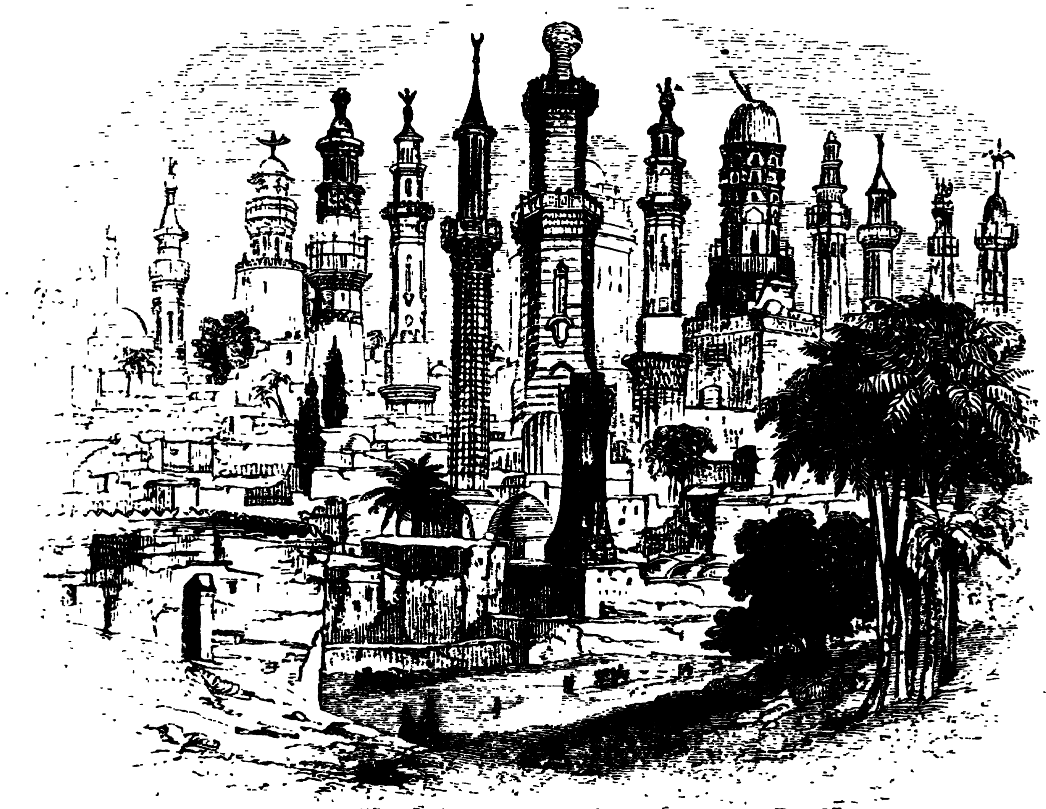
561.—Egyptian Saddles. (Composed from existing Sculptures.)
Cyfrwyau Aiphtaidd. (Wedi eu cyfansoddi o Gerfiadau sy'n bod.)



560.—White Asses. (T. Landseer.)—Judges v. 10.
Asynod Gwynion.



562.—Market at Gato.
Marchnad yn Gato.



559.—Group of Modern Oriental Watch-towers, selected from Examples in the Towns of Lower Egypt.
Twr o Wyl-dyrau-Dwyreiniol Diweddar, wedi eu dethol o Esiamplau yn Ninasoedd yr Aipht Isaf

knew that he had died by a woman's hand, and with a woman's weapons.

This great victory was commemorated by Deborah and Barak in a triumphal ode, which forms a favourable and interesting specimen of the early poetry of the Hebrews. It begins with an animated picture of the oppressed condition in which the Israelites had lately been, marked not by descriptions of particulars, but by suggestive points :—

> "The highways were unfrequented,
> And in by-paths travellers travelled ;
> Deserted were the villages in Israel,
> Until that I, Deborah, arose,
> Until I arose to be a mother in Israel."

From another verse it appears that the Israelites seem to have been deprived of their arms :

> "No shield was seen, nor spear
> Among forty thousand in Israel."

All Israel, high and low, are then invoked to praise the Lord for the great deliverance which had been achieved. The classes thus called upon are distinguished into three classes, the noble, the wealthy, and the poor, by marked circumstances in their condition :

> "Ye who ride upon white asses,
> Ye who recline on splendid carpets,
> And ye who walk the streets,
> Prepare a song."

The first, "those who ride on white asses," we may take to represent the nobles, princes, and magistrates : first, because it is expressly mentioned that the thirty sons of Jair, who afterwards judged Israel, and the seventy sons of Abdon, who also judged Israel, *rode upon asses' colts* (Judg. x. 4 ; xii. 15)—a circumstance which seems to be mentioned as pertaining to their rank in life ; and secondly, because it is a well-known fact that white elephants, camels, asses, and mules, or rather those approaching to white, have always been prized among Oriental nations, and are usually the property of princes. It is also proper to remark that the ass in the warm climates of Western Asia is quite a stately animal in comparison with his degraded brother of the North.

The song then proceeds to praise the tribes which hastened to take arms at the call of Deborah and Barak, while those who neglected it, especially the tribes beyond the Jordan, are pointedly censured :

> "Among the streams of Reuben,
> Great were the resolvings of heart.
> Wherefore didst thou sit still among thy folds,
> And listen to the bleatings of thy herds ?
> Gilead abode beyond Jordan ;
> And Dan, why remained he quiet by the ships ?
> Asher dwelt at ease on the shore of the sea,
> And abode tranquil by his havens."

Then follows a vivid description of the battle, and of the death of Sisera ; and then, by a master-stroke of poetical skill, the scene changes, and the mother of this great commander is introduced as awaiting with impatience for his *triumphant* return, of which no doubt was entertained :

> "Through a window the mother of Sisera looked out,
> And called through the lattice :
> 'Wherefore delayeth h... chariot to come ?
> Why linger the paces of his chariots ?'
> The wise among her noble ladies answered her,
> Yea, she returned answer to herself :
> 'Lo, they have found, they divide the spoil,
> A maiden, two maidens to each warrior ;
> A spoil of dyed garments for Sisera.' "

And answered, that the victors tarry to divide the rich spoils they have won. Leaving the disappointment of these high expectations to be inferred from what had been already stated, the ode, with an apparent abruptness, which is in itself a beauty, concludes with :

> "So perish all thine enemies, Jehovah !
> But they who love him are as the going forth of the sun
> in his strength."*

The great victory which this song commemorates secured to the Israelites a repose of forty years ; towards the end of this period they had again fallen into their wonted idolatries, and were punished by the devastation of their country under the hands of the Midianites and other Eastern tribes. This was a very terrible visitation. It will be remembered that the Midianites had been all but exterminated by Moses, when they, in conjunction with the Moabites, had seduced the Israelites to sin in the matter of Baal-Peor. From the conduct of the Midianites, now that they had the upper hand, it would seem that this fatal event in their history was still, after two hundred years, well remembered by them and bitterly avenged. For we are told that "because of the Midianites, the children of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strongholds."

It would seem from what follows, that their mode of proceeding was precisely similar to that of the Arabs and other nomade people when they make annual incursions into cultivated but weakly defended districts. They did not abide constantly in the land, but came up in the early summer, soon as the early produce began to be collected, and remained through all the season of produce until the autumn, when they withdrew into their deserts. The oppression consisted therefore in seizing the produce of the ground, and of spoiling the people of all their portable possessions. The description given of their course of proceeding is a very graphic picture of the circumstances which take place under similar conditions at the present day : "And it was so, when the Israelites had sown, that the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the children of the East, even they came up against them ; and they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou comest unto Gaza, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass. For they came up with their cattle and their tents, and they came as grasshoppers for multitude ; for both they and their camels were without number ; and they entered into the land to destroy it. And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites, and Israel cried unto the Lord."

That cry was heard in heaven, and a deliverer was raised up for them. The person chosen on this occasion was Gideon, the son of Joash, of the family of Abiezer, who, when the messenger of the Lord appeared, was threshing out corn secretly in so unusual a spot as beside the wine-press, to conceal it from the Midianites. Gideon first perceived the heavenly messenger, as a man sitting under a neighbouring oak. The stranger accosted him with "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour." To which Gideon promptly answered, "If the Lord be with us, why then hath all this befallen us?" This misgiving answer the angel met by bestowing upon him the high commission to deliver Israel : "Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel out of the hand of the Midianites : have not I sent thee ?" Gideon at first attempted to excuse himself, on the ground that his family did not possess in their tribe such a degree of influence as would justify or support so hazardous an undertaking : but when further urged, he intimated his willingness to encounter the toil and danger, provided that he had assurance of the stranger's own authority to bestow such a commission upon him. Nothing further passed at the moment, and Gideon hastened to prepare the refreshment which the rules of hospitality required him to offer the traveller, and for which he prevailed upon the latter to stay. He soon returned with a dressed kid and unleavened cakes in a basket, and with broth in a pot. The stranger directed him to set them down upon the rock hard by, and then furnished the testimonial which the doubts of Gideon required, by causing the whole to be consumed by a spontaneous fire, whereby it seemed to become an offering to God. This satisfied Gideon ; but created another alarm, lest the sight of a supernatural being was the harbinger of death : "Alas, O Lord God !" he cried, "for because I have seen an angel face to face :"—but before he could express all his fears, the Lord said to him, "Fear not : thou shalt not die." Gideon then, in the first feeling of his gratitude, raised an altar to the Lord, whom he addressed by the name of JEHOVAH-SHALOM, "the God of Peace ;" and, without more delay, he prepared himself for the high task to which he now knew that he had been called.

The first achievement of Gideon was the destruction of an altar to Baal, which seems to have belonged to his father's establishment, but in which the people of the place took a general interest. Taking with him ten of the servants on whom he could rely, he proceeded to demolish the idolatrous structure, and set up in its place an altar to Jehovah, on which he offered sacrifice. In the morning, when the people of Ophrah discovered what had been done, they broke out into great anger, and on hearing that the daring act had been performed by Gideon, they demanded that his life should pay for the sacrilege.

* The translations here given differ from those of the Authorized Version. They are taken, with little alteration, from a beautiful translation by Dr. Robinson, in the 'American Biblical Repository' for 1831.

SUNDAY XXII.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

WHEN followed the grand and somewhat mysterious parable of the rich man and Lazarus. It represents a wealthy and luxurious personage, "clad in purple," which, although originally confined to royal and noble personages, was, in the time of Christ, affected by the rich and opulent; "and in fine linen," which, being in those days used chiefly by women, was regarded as effeminate. The portal or porch of a great man's house was a usual resort of beggars; and at this rich man's gate was daily laid a beggar named Lazarus (*helpless*), who, as often happens with persons in his wretched condition, was "full of sores," the result of some cutaneous disorder brought on by hard fare and dirt. He was thus brought to the rich man's gate, that he might be fed with the crumbs that fell from his table. This, it seems, he obtained from the servants, but nothing from the rich man himself—no kind inquiry, no notice, no attempt to alleviate his condition—although he must daily have observed this miserable object as he went in and out. How great that misery was, which this rich man deigned not to notice, is shown by the fact that the street dogs came and licked the sores of Lazarus, which shows that they were open sores, and that they were not, as Isaiah (i. 6) in another place expresses it, "either closed, or bound up, or mollified with ointment."

In course of time the rich man and the poor man died; and then their conditions were reversed. Lazarus—poor no more, no more full of sores—"was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom," that is, to the society of Abraham in Heaven; while the rich man lay in fiery torments afar off. In this painful condition he implored that Lazarus might be sent with one drop of water to cool his parched and burning tongue. Abraham replied, "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted and thou art tormented." This is expressed conformably to the notions of the Hebrews, who used the phrase "receiveth his world" for a course of secular felicity, and were wont to say, "He who shall pass forty days without chastisements has received his world, a full abundant reward for all the good he hath done here." Abraham also pointed to the obstacle which existed in the "great chasm," impassable to either party, which lay between them. On hearing this, the wretched soul's thoughts then took another direction, and he implored Abraham to send Lazarus to his five brethren, still living in his father's house (which implies that he had himself died young), to warn them, lest they also came to that place of torment. Abraham said, "They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them." But the other urged, "Nay, father Abraham, but if one went to them from the dead, they will repent;" a common but most erroneous belief, to which Abraham cogently and truly answered, "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." As Doddridge remarks, "The impenitence of many who saw another Lazarus raised from the dead (John xi. 4), and the wickedness of the soldiers who were eye-witnesses to the resurrection of Christ, and yet that very day suffered themselves to be hired to bear a false testimony against it (Matt. xxviii. 4, 5), are most affecting and astonishing illustrations of this truth."

After this our Lord addressed his disciples in sundry discourses, in which he taught them to avoid giving cause of offence, and to be forgiving and merciful to one another, even under repeated provocation. The disciples then, having been taught so much respecting charity and benevolence towards men, expressed a desire to be taught also concerning faith towards God, of which he had so often spoken to them, and that they might have more of that faith imparted to them, to which he had so often alleged all things to be possible. To their remarkable words, "Increase our faith," he replied by the strong hyperbole, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye might say unto this sycamine (sycamore) tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you." Hyperboles like this, expressive of physical impossibilities, were common among the Hebrews, and are to be taken not as literal propositions, but as assertions to which intensity is given by illustrative hyperboles.

It seems that our Lord had returned from Jerusalem to Galilee, where some of the above transactions occurred, for we next read that he is again about to journey to Jerusalem (Luke xvii. 11), probably to attend the Feast of Dedication. As his object was to preach the Gospel on his journey, he sent messengers before him as he went through Galilee and Samaria; and we cannot question that the intelligence of the coming of the prophet of Nazareth drew large audiences to hear his utterances and to witness his miracles. Once they entered a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him; but, as he was on the way to one of the feasts, they refused to receive him. The annual festivals at Jerusalem were odious to this people, who believed that they ought to be celebrated at their own temple on Mount Gerizim, and the Feast of Dedication was particularly disliked by them, as it was of human institution, and they recognised no festivals or observances but such as Moses had established. This refusal awakened the indignation of the two sons of Zebedee—those "Sons of Thunder"—and they said, "Wilt thou that we command fire to come down out of heaven and consume them, even as Elias did?" But he turned and rebuked them, saying, "The Son of Man is come not to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

At another village ten men who were lepers heard with joy of the approach of one by whom so many of their afflicted brotherhood had been made whole. Not being allowed to enter towns, or to mix with sound men, they stood afar off, outside the town, and as the Saviour drew nigh they cried loudly, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." A cry for mercy was never heard by him in vain. Yet he did not immediately heal them, but, to try their faith, sent them to show themselves for examination by the priest, intending that they should be healed on the way. Believing that he could heal them, even when already gone, they turned their steps with glad hearts towards the holy city. It is observed that Christ told them to go and show themselves to the *priests*; and as there was no need for one person to show himself to many priests, it is hence inferred that, the matter being one of merely medical jurisdiction, he sent those of the lepers who were Jews to Jerusalem, and those who were Samaritans to Mount Gerizim, to be inspected by their own priests. This is doubtful; but it is certain that they were perfectly cured as they proceeded on their way. It is easy to conceive with Bishop Hall, "what an amazed joy there was among these lepers when they found themselves thus suddenly cured: each tells other what a change he feels in himself; each comforts other with the assurance of his outward clearness; each congratulates other's happiness, and thinks, and says, 'How joyful this news will be to their friends and families!'" They hastened on their way to show themselves to the priest and claim the certificate of recovery, which would restore them to the society of men and to the pleasant intercourse of life. There was among them one only whose grateful emotions overcame for the moment even this natural desire to realise the privileges of his new condition; and he who returned to thank his deliverer was a Samaritan. Jesus could not but remark on this circumstance. He said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?"

Soon after this, some of the Pharisees took occasion to question him when the kingdom of God would come. By this they doubtless meant the manifestation of the Messiah as a conqueror and king; and from the tenor of his answers we may infer that the question was asked in some derision of his own claims. He told them in reply, that the Son of Man would not come with any of the external show and pomp which they expected. He then more particularly addressed his own disciples, and warned them of the impostors which should hereafter arise, claiming to be the Messiah, and seducing many to follow them to their ruin. Then, in many striking comparisons, he illustrated the suddenness and effect of his coming to execute judgment upon the nation from which he was about "to suffer many things." "As it was in the days of Noah," he said, "so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, till the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise also it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed."

From this, by a natural transition, he passed to enjoin the importance of constant prayer and implicit reliance on the divine assistance, in the parable of the Importunate Widow, who day after day urged an unjust and impious judge to do her justice upon her adversary. She could not upon the merits of her case or from his compassion obtain attention; but at length he did her the justice she required, for no other reason than to release himself from her worrying applications. "And," said Jesus, "shall not God," the just and merciful, who does not despise, but love "his own elect," repel all injury from them, even though he seem for a while regardless of their prayers?



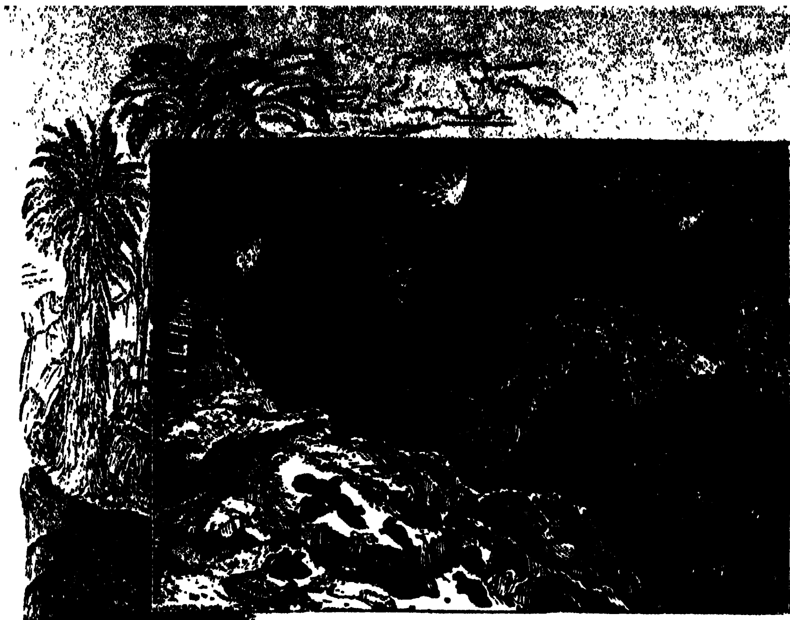
563.—The Prodigal Son. (Spada.)
Y Mab Afradlon.



564.—The Leper kneeling to Christ.
Y Gwahanglwyfus yn ymgrymu i Grist.



565.—Lazarus at the Gate.
Lazarus wrth y Porth.



574.—Psalm cii.

HEAR my prayer, O Lord.—1.

I am become like a pelican in the wilderness: and like an owl that is in the desert.—6.

Psalm civ.

The high hills are a refuge for the wild goats: and so are the stony rocks for the conies.—18.

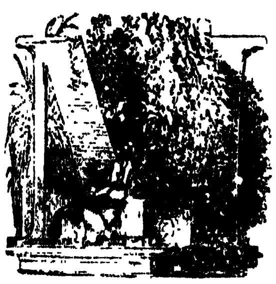


567.—Psalm xcv.

COME, let us sing unto the Lord.—1.

Psalm xcix.

Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among such as call upon his name: these called upon the Lord, and he heard them.—6.



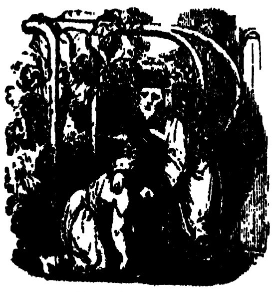
573.—Psal i.



566.—"The days of our years are threescore years and ten." (Canova.)—Psalm xc. 10.
"Yn nyddiau ein blynyddoedd y mae deng mlynedd a thrigain."



568.—Psalm xcvi.



572.—Psalm ciii.



569.—Psalm xcvii.







571.—Psalm xcix.



570.—Psalm xcviii.

SUNDAY XXIII.—THE PSALMS.

TITLES OF THE PSALMS.

COMMENTATORS, for the most part, regard SELAH as a proper word by itself, and explain it either from the Arabic word *Shelav*, in the sense of "section," or from a Hebrew word signifying "to rest," in which case it would denote a pause: or from another Hebrew word signifying "to raise," whence it would mean an elevation of the voice, and denote a change of *tart*, or the repetition of the melody, with an elevation of tone in the pitch. This variety of interpretations will show the obscurity of the subject; but the last of them is the one which those writers who have paid the most attention to it seem to prefer. But these are not all; for there are many who regard this remarkable word as an abbreviation, because the form of the word is so very peculiar, and because similar abbreviations are frequent in Oriental writings. But the process of deciphering this abbreviation is altogether conjectural and uncertain.

SHIGGAION. Psalm vii. and Habakkuk iii. (where it is plural). The usual interpretation of this word is that of *Elegy*, which agrees very well with both the places in which it occurs.

SHUSHAN. Psalm lx., and plural SHOSHANIM in xlv., lxix., lxxx. The word means a "lily," and is thought to denote some kind of musical instrument, probably a cymbal, shaped like a lily.

SHIR. This word means a "Song," and is used in the titles of some Psalms with different additions, to denote the kind of song to which it is prefixed: thus—

SHIR-YEDIDOTH. Psalm xlv., where the authorized version has "a song of loves" which, however, does not agree with the contents. "A song of loveliness," that is, "a lovely song," would probably be better.

SHIR-HAMMALOTH is the title given to the so-called "Psalms of Degrees," being the words so translated in our version. They are Psalms cxx.—cxxxiv. Great uncertainty exists respecting the meaning. The Jews themselves allege, that these Psalms were sung upon the fifteen steps which led to the court of the Israelites in the temple—a fable spun out of the number of these Psalms, and the common signification of the word in question, which is that of *a step*. It is a more general opinion that these Psalms are pilgrim songs, which the Jews chanted in their journey to attend the feasts at Jerusalem, or on their return from the Exile. The word *alah*, "ascent," or "going up," is well known to denote the journey to Jerusalem, as well as the return from Captivity; and the plural of the word might apply to the two returns under Zerubbabel and Jeshua, and under Ezra. But neither the one nor the other of these definitions accords with the matter and character of these Psalms. On the joyful occasion of going up to attend the feasts at Jerusalem, the songs would hardly be sung of so plaintive a tone as belongs to several of the "Psalms of Degrees," as, for example, cxx., cxxiii., cxxx.; and at the time of the going up from Captivity, it would not be said, as in Psalm cxxii. 1, "Let us go up to the house of the Lord;" nor could Jerusalem be then celebrated for the compactness of its buildings (verse 3). Abandoning these and other interpretations equally open to objection, we may rest with some confidence on the explanation which makes the expression to denote the gradually progressive rhythm of thought peculiar to these psalms, and of which there will be another occasion in this work of speaking more fully.

SHIR-HANUCATH HABAYITH. Psalm xxx. There is no doubt that this means—"Song of the dedication of the house." But if this refers to the occasion of the Psalm, it would seem to have been founded on a mistaken interpretation of verse 8 on the part of the person who devised the title; or, as others conjecture, from the dance in verse 11 being supposed to refer to David's dancing before the ark. For whether we understand "the dedication of the house" to denote the dedication of the tabernacle, or of David's residence, or the purification of the house after its desecration by Absalom, there is not a single allusion to these events in the matter of the Psalm. It seems better to take the words as a designation of the melody. There was perhaps a song in common use at the dedication of houses (Deut. xx. 5), after the melody of which we may suppose this Psalm to have been sung.

SHEMINITH. Psalms vi. and xii. This word means simply *eighth*, and is usually supposed to denote a musical instrument either with eight chords, or harmonious to an octave, or the eighth in the arrangement, which last seems to accord best with the form of the word. Some good authorities, however, regard it as the designation of a key, perhaps the mode which was sung by male voices in the bass. In 1 Chron. xv. 21, the same word occurs, and is supposed in that place to denote the gravest of three voices.

TEHILLAH. Psalm cxlv., denotes "a song of praise." This is a title which might be applied to many of the Psalms, although only the present one is actually thus designated.

TEPHILLAH. Psalms xc. and cxlii. The word means prayer, and in its application here denotes a poem addressed to God. Why this title should be applied to these two Psalms alone, when so many others are of a supplicatory character, it is impossible to guess.

AUTHORS OF THE PSALMS.—As the names of the supposed authors of the Psalms are often given in the titles, this very naturally becomes the next point to which our attention is called.

The opinion of the Talmud, and of many of the Fathers, and even of some moderns, that David was the author of all the Psalms, is contradicted by the very titles which give the names of several other authors. The believers in the general authorship of David, however, get over this difficulty, by supposing that these names refer not to the authors, but to individuals whom David, in composing the Psalms, prophetically represented; and the Talmud, in particular, alleges that David wrote these Psalms by tradition from, or in the succession, or after the manner of Moses, Heman, Jeduthun, Asaph, the children of Korah, and others still earlier, even Adam himself. But others, such as St. Jerome and Aben Ezra, regard those persons as the authors whose names are found in the titles. It has, however, been doubted, whether the designation rendered in our version "of," and sometimes "to" (for the particle is the same in the original) David, or Asaph, &c., really does denote authorship. It is safest, however, to conclude that it does so, but with the qualification that when we read "to" or "of" the "children of Korah," &c., the title should have ascribed the Psalm to one of the Korahites only; but as the individual was unknown, it mentions them all, so that the phrase should in strict propriety be "a Korahite Psalm." Sometimes, however, the prefixed particle is joined to names which evidently designate not the authors, but the subjects, as in Psalm lxxii. "for Solomon," and Psalm xxi. "of David," where probably Solomon and David are the subjects of the Psalms. In this case, we are tempted to assign to the phrase a different signification; but, under all such anomalies, it is best—as no one contends for the Divine authority of the titles—to conclude that some gross mistakes were committed by the authors of them. The following are the names which are mentioned in the titles of the Psalms:—

1. MOSES, to whom the 90th Psalm is ascribed. The Talmudists assign also the ten next succeeding Psalms to Moses, according to their rule that the anonymous Psalms belong to the author who was last mentioned. This curious rule has been followed by many Christian interpreters, but is now generally deemed untenable. That the 90th Psalm really belongs to Moses has been doubted by many, and the question is one not easy to set at rest.

DAVID is the most distinguished and fruitful contributor to the collection of the Psalms. Seventy-four of the whole number are ascribed to him by name. To these the Septuagint adds six more (Psalms xxxiii., xliii., xci., xciv., xcix., civ.), to which many add all or nearly all the Psalms to which no name is prefixed. But, according to the judgment of the best expositors, many of the Psalms which bear David's name cannot be his, as they contain allusions to the siege of Jerusalem, the Babylonish captivity, and similar events belonging to a later age, besides occasional Chaldaisms. To this number belong Psalms xiv., lxix., ciii., cxxii. and other "Psalms of Degrees," with Psalm cxxxix and others. This fact is enough to shake our confidence in the correctness of even those applications of David's name where the same intrinsic objection does not exist. An argument against some of these appropriations may, however, be derived from the great uniformity of subject in many of the Psalms ascribed to David. As De Wette remarks, "No poet repeats himself thus; least of all would one do so who was capable of composing such an elegy as that upon Saul and Jonathan." The character attributed to David's poetry, adds the same writer, "by almost all commentators, is that of sweetness, elegance, grace; they deny it sublimity, a judgment in which I cannot fully acquiesce. Psalms like xviii., xix., lx., lxv., indisputably claim to be called sublime."

SUNDAY XXIII.—BIBLE HISTORY.

BUT Joash, who, in his anxiety for his son, forgot for the moment his own interest in the forbidden worship, interposed with an argument which seems to have had at all times extraordinary power over the minds of the idolatrous Jews—"If Baal be a God (he said), let him plead for himself;" or, in other words, leave him to avenge his own cause, if he is able, upon the frail mortal who has provoked his anger. They yielded to this: and the absence of any present stroke of Baal's anger seems to have shaken their minds, and disposed them to look upon Gideon with something of awe and confidence. It was from this circumstance that the hero obtained his second name of Jerub-baal (with whom *Baal contends*).

This seems to have been designed as a sort of preparation for the great work which lay before him. A great and suspicious movement took place in the wandering hordes, who, having collected their forces, passed over into the plain of Esdraelon, and lay there encamped. Upon hearing of this, Gideon felt that the time for action was come; and he summoned first his own kinsmen, the house of Abiezer, to assist him in repelling the host of Midian. Their prompt obedience enabled him to send with the name of authority, to summon the northern tribes of Manasseh, Zebulun, Asher, and Naphtali to his standard. This call was obeyed, and he found himself at the head of thirty-two thousand men.

But while Gideon thus encouraged others, he was not himself without misgivings respecting the result of his perilous undertaking. Hence he was induced to implore an unambiguous token of the Divine concurrence, in the form of such a miracle as he should ask to be performed. Some think that it was more to encourage his followers than on his own account that he made this singular request. The sign he desired was, that the dew should fall on a fleece of wool, while the ground on which it lay continued dry. This happened according to his wish, and he wrung from the fleece a bowlful of water while the ground was perfectly dry. The marvel was here in the copiousness of the dew; for that *some* dew should be on the fleece, while none could be perceived on the ground, would have been in entire accordance with the laws of nature. Gideon could not but know this, and therefore, to place the matter beyond all doubt or cavil, he implored that the sign should be reversed, and that the fleece should be dry, while the ground was moistened by the deposition from the atmosphere. This also was done; and here the interposition of Heaven was most manifest, for wool having a much greater attraction for moisture than common dust or clay has, it was not natural that the fleece should be dry when there was moisture on all the ground.

Having no longer any doubt that Jehovah was on his side, and that the victory with which his arms were to be crowned was to proceed from the blessing of Heaven, he readily adopted a suggestion, communicated to him from above, for impressing upon the minds of his soldiers the same salutary conviction. One would think that the number of thirty-two thousand men was by no means too large for the conflict with the innumerable hosts of Midian; but the object of the Divine King was to reduce this to a number manifestly inefficient, that there might be no mistake as to the source from whence deliverance came, and that Israel might not boast that by the strength of his own arm the yoke of Midian had been broken. Gideon was therefore ordered to proclaim, that all who were fearful and faint-hearted might withdraw to their own homes. Many, whose hearts had seemed stout while the danger was remote, shrunk, now that the enemy was before them, and not fewer than twenty-two thousand quitted the field. But ten thousand brave men still presented a formidable band, equal in numerical strength to the troops of Barak, who defeated the immense host of Sisera; and therefore, that room for boasting might be altogether excluded, means were taken to reduce even this force to a mère handful of men, manifestly unequal of itself, or, as an instrumental means, to defeat the hordes of Midian and Amalek. Gideon took his ten thousand men to the water, and those who went down upon their knees to drink from the stream were set apart from those who drank by raising the water to their mouths in the hollow of their hands. The former were ten thousand, the latter three hundred; and the smaller number was that with which the Lord declared that he would deliver Israel. In the following night Gideon, attended by his servant Phurah, went down to the host of Midian, having been promised encouragement from overhearing the remarks of the Midianites upon the state of their affairs. He heard one man report to another, beside whom he lay, a dream, representing a cake of barley bread rolling down from the hills, and overturning the tents of Midian. "This is nothing else," said his companion, "save the sword of Gideon, the son of Joash, a man of Israel; for into his hand hath God delivered Midian and all his host." Gideon needed no other encouragement than the knowledge that such an impression as this existed among the Midianites; and he forthwith returned to his men. He perceived that his best course would be to work upon the alarm which already existed among the invading host. He therefore provided every man with a trumpet in one hand, and with a lamp concealed in a pitcher in the other. He then divided his troop into three companies of one hundred men each, directing them to advance upon the host of Midian on different sides, and in all respects to follow his example. Accordingly, when they had advanced sufficiently near, they halted, withdrew the lamps from the pitchers, dashed the pitchers to the ground, and then blew a tremendous blast upon their trumpets, and shouted—"The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" The sudden blaze on different sides of the camp, the crash, the sound from trumpets sufficient for a large host, and the ensuing shout, perfectly confounded the rude Midianites thus aroused from sleep. They deemed themselves surrounded by a mighty host, and rushed amazedly about, slaying each other, as every one among them deemed the person he encountered an enemy. The men who had been dismissed the preceding day made themselves useful in pursuing the fugitives, and contributed to render the rout of the enemy, and the deliverance of Israel, most complete. The Ephraimites, who had not been called into action, now voluntarily came forward, and rendered good service by seizing the fords of the Jordan, and destroying such of the defeated invaders as attempted to escape to their own country. Here two of the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb, fell into their hands; and they struck off their heads, and sent them to the victorious Gideon on the opposite side of the Jordan. The haughty Ephraimites were, however, not sparing in their rebukes of Gideon for not having in the first instance called them to the field; but with great tact he averted their wrath by extolling their last exploit, and by speaking lightly of his own deeds in the comparison. The hero was in hot pursuit of Zeba and Zalmunna, two of the invading enemies, who had succeeded in crossing the river, and were retiring with a considerable body of men to their own land. Gideon followed hard after them with his chosen band, and at length came up with them. Then perceiving the small number of his men, they were encouraged to stand on their defence. But the battle ended in the total discomfiture of Zeba and his colleague, who fell alive into the hands of the conqueror. When they were brought before him, he asked them what manner of men were certain Israelites whom they had surprised and slain on Mount Tabor. They answered—"As thou art, so were they; each one resembled the children of a king." On which he exclaimed with anguish—"They were my brethren—even the sons of my mother! As the Lord liveth, if ye had saved them alive, I would not slay you." That he had under any circumstances intended to spare their lives, shows that the usages of war had already become somewhat more mild than they had been, or that Gideon was not disposed to enforce them rigorously. Now, however, the duty of an avenger for his brothers' blood devolved upon him; and he transferred it to his eldest son Jether, whom he desired "to fall upon them.' But the youth was awed by the majestic presence of these staid warriors, and shrunk from the task. On which the captive princes said to Gideon—"Rise thou, and fall upon us: for as the man is, so is his strength;" and on this hint he arose and slew them on the spot.

Another painful matter remained: this was the punishment of certain cities, Succoth and Penuel, which had refused any succour to his weary troop when pursuing the retreating princes, and had even added insult to wrong by the manner in which the refusal was conveyed. For this he cast down the tower of Penuel, and slew the chief men of the city. The punishment of Succoth is not so well understood. He threatened "to tear their flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briers;" and it is added, that on his triumphant return "he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briers, and with them he taught the men of Succoth." The most painful interpretation of this is the most probable; namely, that the expressions allude to an ancient and very cruel mode by which persons were put to death under torture, by having thorns and briers laid over their naked bodies, and then drawing over them some heavy implement of husbandry—being, as supposed, the same treatment to which David subjected the Ammonites (2 Sam. xii. 34; 1 Chron. xx. 3).

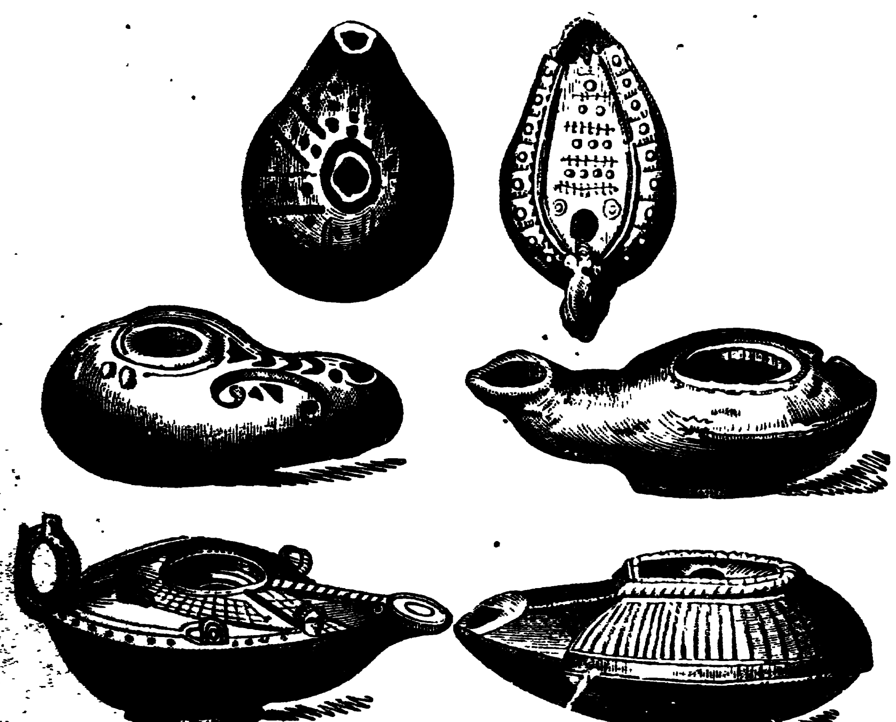
So great was the relief which the Israelites now experienced, and



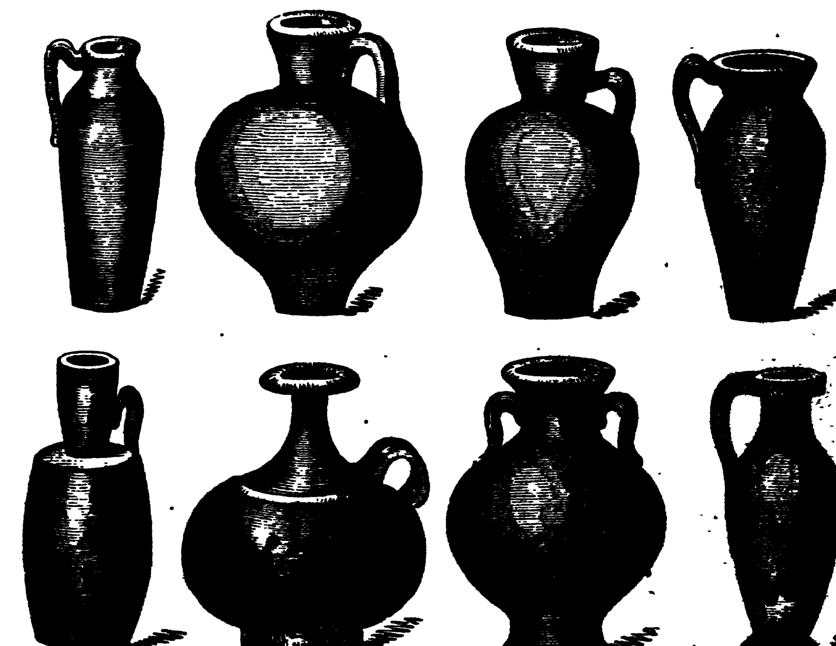
577.—Gideon selecting his Men. (N. Poussin.)—Judges vii.
Gedēon yn dewis ei Wyr.



578.—Destruction of the Midianites by Gideon's three Companies. (Hoet.)—Judg. vii.
Dinystr y Midianiaid gan Drichanwr Gedēon.



580.—Egyptian Lamps.
Lampau Aiphtaidd.



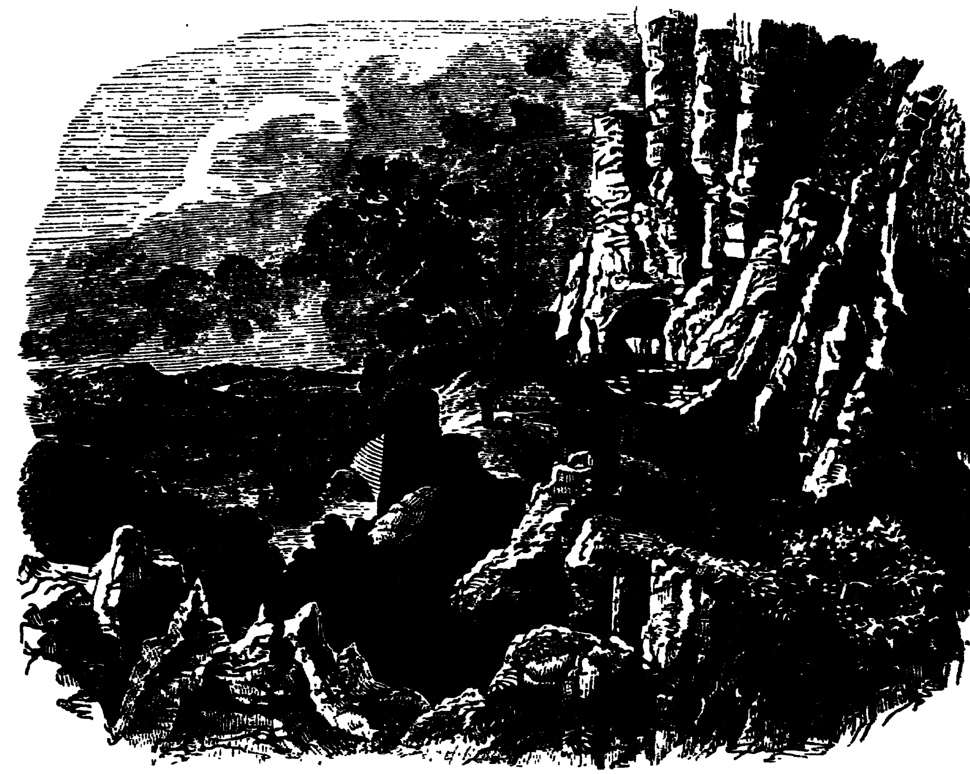
579.—Egyptian Pitchers.
Piserau Aiphtaidd.



383.—Meeting of Jephthah and his Daughter.—Judges xi.
Cyfarfyddiad Jephthah a'i Ferch.



382.—Repentance of Israel. (Canova.)—Judges x.
Edifeirwch Israel.



381.—View in the Mountains of Judea.
"Dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strong holds."—Judges vi. 2.
Golygfa ym Mynyddoedd Judea.
"Y llochesau sydd yn y mynyddoedd, a'r ogofeydd, a'r amddiffynfäoedd."

so sensible were they of the high qualities which Gideon had evinced, that they formally offered to make him king, and to entail the crown upon his descendants. But Gideon, knowing that they had no right to make such an offer, which was altogether adverse to the spirit of the theocratical institutions, answered with great promptness and decision, "I will not reign over you, neither shall my son reign over you. Jehovah, he shall reign over you." The only return which he required for his great services was that they should bestow upon him the collars and ear-rings which had been taken from the bodies of the slaughtered Midianites. This they very willingly did: and with these spoils he made an ephod, which he placed in his own city of Ophrah. This is supposed to indicate that he sat up a sacerdotal establishment, with priests, vestments, and Urim and Thummim, at the place where he had formerly built an altar and offered sacrifice to Jehovah. If so, Gideon acted doubtless with the best intentions; but the proceeding was irregular and contrary to the law, which directed that there should be but one establishment for sacrifice to the whole people—that one being the place of the tabernacle, where the Divine Presence abode "between the cherubim." We are not, therefore, surprised to learn that this establishment eventually "became a snare to Gideon and to his house."

The Israelites enjoyed forty years of peace under the administration of Gideon, who died in 1273 B.C., leaving behind him not fewer than seventy sons. One of them, named Abimelech, succeeded in persuading the people of Shechem, his mother's native town, to bestow upon him the crown which his father had refused: as a preliminary to this step, he had massacred all his brothers except the youngest, named Jotham, who succeeded in making his escape. This person could not restrain himself from making his appearance at Shechem to give vent to his indignation and disgust when he found that the citizens had made Abimelech king. He did this in the well-known and ingenious apologue of the trees making choice of a king, which is without doubt the oldest composition of the kind which has reached our times. After delivering it, Jotham withdrew to Beer, and remained there till the death of Abimelech, who three years after was killed by a piece of millstone cast by a woman's hand over the wall of a town he was besieging.

The succeeding governments of Tola and of Jair covered a period of forty-four years; and we may infer that in their time the Israelites prospered: for the Book of Judges, which is, in fact, an account of the diseases in the Hebrew commonwealth, records nothing concerning the time in which they ruled.

After the death of Jair, the people relapsed into idolatry, and for their chastisement the Ammonites were allowed to master them, and to keep them under subjection for eighteen years. This calamity particularly affected the tribes beyond the Jordan, who occupied a country which had in part belonged of old to the Ammonites, whose existing territory was still upon the border of their dominions. The oppressions to which they were subjected became so grievous, that they at length turned to the Lord, confessed their sins before him, and implored him to pity their great affliction. Then trusting in the Divine succour, they resolved to take the field against their enemies. They, therefore, assembled in considerable numbers at Mizpeh, while the Ammonites lay encamped in Gilead. There was the impulse, the readiness to act, and men prepared for action. But they were without a head. After so long a subjection, which had been preceded by a still longer peace, there was not one among them who seemed to have sufficient experience in war to act as their leader. The only person they could think of was one Jephthah, the illegitimate son of Gilead, a person of some consequence in the half tribe of Manasseh beyond the Jordan. This man had been turned adrift by the family on the death of the father, and withdrew into the land of Tob, where he became the chief of a set of wild fellows of desperate fortunes, who subsisted by predatory excursions, border forays, against the enemies and oppressors of Israel. This course of proceeding by no means tended to render them unpopular in Israel; and accordingly Jephthah became the person to whom all eyes turned on this singular emergency. A deputation was accordingly sent to him without delay. The hero's experience in life had not been calculated to teach him confidence in man or reliance upon popular impulses. He therefore, after some sharp remarks upon the treatment he had received in Gilead, refused to accept the arduous duties offered to him, unless they would undertake that he should remain their head after his immediate service had been completed. This stipulation for power was in a spirit different from that of Gideon, by whom even regal power was refused when spontaneously offered. But the circumstances were different; and if Jephthah had not been aware of peculiar facilities which his unconnected position offered to those who might wish to shake him off, he would not have deemed it necessary to stipulate for that which it was not usual to refuse. The delegates, however, readily acceded to the terms which Jephthah offered, and swore to observe them.

The first act of the new commander was to send an embassy to the Ammonites, to demand the reason of their invasion of the territory of the Israelites. This was a very remarkable step, and seems to show that by this time society had come to expect that there should be some good reason for invasion and warfare. Accordingly the Ammonites returned what they considered a good reason, alleging that the territory which the Hebrews possessed in that quarter had formerly belonged to them, and that they had a right to recover possession of it. Jephthah replied, that the Israelites had taken the land not from the Ammonites, but from the Amorites by whom they had long before been dispossessed; and, moreover, that it was a land which the Lord had given to them, and which, therefore, they had a right to possess. The Ammonites, however, were not convinced by these reasons, and the armies advanced to give each other battle.

When Jephthah left his home to lead the army of Israel to battle, he uttered the rash vow, that if the Lord gave him victory over his enemies, whatsoever came forth out of his house to meet him on his return "shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering." He was victorious. The Lord delivered the Ammonites into his hands, and they were smitten from Aroer unto the plain of the vineyards with a very great slaughter. He returned to his house in peace: and the one whom by his vow he had fore-doomed—the one who came forth from his house to meet him on his return—was his own daughter, his only child—"beside her he had neither son nor daughter." She went forth exultingly, with timbrels and with dances, to greet her victorious father. But he no sooner beheld her than his strong heart gave way beneath the stroke, and he rent his robes, crying, "Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low; for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and cannot go back." But the daughter inherited the heroic qualities of her father. In the general blessing and benefit, her own doom seemed a light matter to her, and she answered, "My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance of thee upon thine enemies."

All she asked was a reprieve of two months, "to bewail her virginity upon the mountains;" which must be interpreted with reference to the fact of its being in Israel held the greatest possible calamity for a woman not to become the mother of children. At the end of two months she returned, and we are told that her afflicted father "did with her according to his vow." The plain reading of the sacred text would lead every one to conclude that he offered her up for a burnt-offering. If he did so he committed a horrid crime under mistaken views of religious duty; and this has led many pious commentators to endeavour to clear his memory from this stigma. The ground which has been taken is, that his vow implied that he would sacrifice what was fit for sacrifice; but if that which came forth to meet him were not fit for a burnt-offering, it should be the Lord's in some other way; and it is therefore concluded that the daughter was in this case consecrated in perpetual celibacy to the service of Jehovah. This ground is now, however, generally abandoned by sound scholars, and few hesitate to believe that Jephthah really did sacrifice his daughter. The fact is so understood by Josephus, and lamented by him; and as he could not fail to know the prevailing impression among his countrymen, his corroborative testimony is of much value for the interpretation of the incident as a point of history. He says that Jephthah blamed his daughter for being so forward in coming forth to meet him; for that his vow obliged him to offer her in sacrifice to the Lord. He adds, "However, this action was not ungrateful to her, since she was to die upon occasion of her father's victory, and the liberty of her fellow-citizens. She only desired her father to give her leave for two months to bewail her youth with her countrywomen, and then she consented that at the end of the forementioned time he might do with her agreeably to his vow. Accordingly, when the time was over, he sacrificed his daughter as a burnt-offering, presenting such an oblation as was neither conformable to the law nor acceptable to God; nor weighing with himself what opinion the hearers would have of such a practice." Nothing can be plainer than this; and the general opinion of both Jewish and Christian antiquity has been in agreement with it; the notion that the hero did not sacrifice his daughter being of comparatively modern prevalence. The fact seems to be that the Israelites, having been long plunged in idolatry and infected with idolatrous iniquities, and in habits of too familiar intercourse with their heathen neighbours, had imbibed their notions respecting the meritoriousness of human sacrifice; and a man who had led a wild life, like Jephthah, was not likely to be well-informed on points which even quiet people had neglected.

SUNDAY XXIII.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

JESUS having thus taught the importance and use of urgent prayer, proceeded to show by another parable the spirit in which prayer should be offered. Two men went up to the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, the other a publican. They both stood, no other posture being allowed in public prayer except to kings, who were not forbidden to sit. But the Pharisee stood wrapt in himself, and said, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers—*or even as this publican.* I fast twice in the week, I give tithe of all that I possess." This he said silently, or "within himself," since the rest of the congregation, who might have supposed that he was praying for the welfare of the people, would have taken umbrage if they had discovered that he was only speaking evil of others. In his unuttered words he claimed a righteousness beyond the law, and rested with proud confidence upon it. The fasting twice in the week was not required by the law, but was observed by Pharisaic devotees; the tithe of *all* that he possessed was not exacted by the law, but was minutely and rigidly enforced by the Pharisees. In this confidence of a claim on heaven, the Pharisee had planted himself in the interior part of the temple court, as near to the sanctuary as the regulations of divine service would admit; but the publican humbly stood afar off in the outer borders of the temple court, "and would not so much as lift his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'" "I tell you (added Jesus) that *this* man went down to his house justified rather than the other."

It was not on the road from Galilee to Jerusalem, as some suppose, that Jesus was hospitably entertained in the house of Martha. She lived at Bethany, quite in an opposite quarter; which shows that our Lord early visited the place after his arrival at Jerusalem; and perhaps lodged there, returning daily to the city, Bethany being only just on the other side of the Mount of Olives. Martha appears to have been a widow, with whom lived her sister Mary, and her brother Lazarus. With this family our Lord was very intimate, and Lazarus, in particular, was favoured with his friendship and love. They were all rejoiced to see him again: and Martha, "on hospitable thoughts intent," busied herself in preparing for the entertainment of him and his disciples. This was *her* way of showing her regard for Christ; but her sister Mary chose rather to remain near him, that she might not lose the opportunity of profiting by his heavenly instructions, and that the gracious words which fell from him might not be lost to her.

The task which Martha had imposed upon herself of providing handsomely for so large a party, suddenly arrived, was heavy, and its hurry and solicitude made her regard the course taken by her sister as idleness, and as neglect of a matter in which Christ and the friends he had brought with him were essentially concerned. Confident that Jesus must view it in the same light, and must fully appreciate her bustling care for his entertainment, she ventured to complain to him, "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her, therefore, that she help me" But how much was she astonished to hear him answer, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about *many* things; but *one* thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." She could not but understand this pointed contrast of the many cares of this life, with that *one* matter of infinite concern to man—the salvation of his soul.

During the feast, Jesus held that discourse with the Jews in Solomon's Porch, wherein he alleged to them that his works alone sufficiently proved him to be the Son of God, to all whose hearts were not hardened, as theirs were, in unbelief (John x. 22—39). He set this point so strongly before them, that they thought they had ground on which to proceed against him, and therefore sought to apprehend him; but he escaped their hands, and departed from Jerusalem.

When the feast was ended, our Lord left Jerusalem; but, instead of returning to Galilee, he went beyond the Jordan, to the place where John at first baptized, and remained there for some time. He was here in a neighbourhood, the people of which had heard much of the Baptist's instructions, and had witnessed his course of proceeding; and the presence of Jesus reminded them, and many others who flocked to him, of the testimony which John himself, whose memory they venerated, had here borne to Christ. They considered that John had wrought no miracles, and yet many had been disposed to regard him as the Messiah: how much, then, were they bound to recognise the Messiah in Jesus, who had wrought so many miracles, and to whom John himself had borne his most distinct testimony. The people were thus pre-disposed to believe in him; and many, moved by the testimony of John and by his own discourses, did receive him as the expected Messiah. There, then, in comparative quiet, among a well-disposed people, free from the plots of the Sanhedrim and the malignant opposition of the Pharisees, the Saviour of men spent some portion of the last four months of his life. It was one of those seasons of repose which we often note to occur in the history of men, before they come to the great and crowning struggle of their lives, and which even the Saviour did not deem it unfit to realize before he entered upon the tremendous scenes of that "hour" which he had so often said was not yet come; but which he knew to be now nigh at hand.

Jesus was still at this place, when Martha and Mary, by whom he had lately been entertained at Bethany, sent to acquaint him with the alarming illness of their brother Lazarus, in the words, "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick." When Jesus heard this, he did not, as the sisters probably expected, hasten at once to the relief of his friend; but sent back the answer, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." The evangelist adds, "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus," as if designedly to point our attention to the seemingly unaccountable conduct of Jesus in remaining still for two days in the place without apparent notice of the tidings which had been brought to him. After that, Jesus made known to the disciples his intention to return into Judea. They, knowing how lately his life had been sought at Jerusalem, could not conceal the astonishment they felt at this intelligence. He then said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of his sleep." But perceiving that they understood him to speak literally of sleep, he said more plainly, "Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sake that I was not there, to the intent that you may believe: nevertheless, let us go unto him." So convinced were the disciples that, from the exasperated feeling of the Jews, this journey would end in the death of their master, that they followed him as men prepared for that result, and ready to die with him.

When Jesus arrived at Bethany, Lazarus had been already four days in the grave; and many of the Jerusalem friends of the family were present in the place, having come over (the distance being but two miles) to comfort Martha and Mary. The bereaved sisters were now informed of the Lord's approach. It is curious to observe the characteristic difference of procedure in the two sisters on this interesting occasion. The ever-active Martha immediately arose and hastened forth to meet the Saviour, while Mary remained quiet in her grief. The sight of the Saviour awakened in Martha the assurance of faith, which had perhaps, under the circumstances, been somewhat weakened; and she cried passionately, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died;" in which words it is even possible to detect a half-formed wish to ask that he would raise him from the dead. Jesus answered vaguely, as if to lay open the state of her heart, "Thy brother shall rise again;" and not receiving so direct an answer as she perhaps expected, Martha was again dejected, and answered, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day;" which seems to imply that this was a truth too general to satisfy her. Jesus answered, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." That in thus directing her attention to the inner life, and the life beyond the grave, Christ doubtless intended to rebuke gently her too unsubdued grief is shown by the pointed question, "Believest thou this?" And sorrow and shame permitted the troubled Martha, in whose heart the feeling of an unconditioned and faithful surrender was re-awakened, only to answer, "Yea, Lord; I believe thou art the Christ, the Son of God, that should come into the world."

She then went to fetch Mary, who no sooner heard that Jesus desired her presence, than she arose and went with her sister. The communication had been private, and her friends, who saw her hastily quit the house, supposed that a sudden impulse of sorrow had led her forth to weep at her brother's grave, and they followed after her. Jesus had not yet entered the town, probably to avoid exciting too much attention, and perhaps also that he might go from the place where he was to the grave; the burying-grounds being outside of the city or town, as is still customary among the Orientals.



584.—Publican and Pharisee.
Y Pharisead a'r Publican.



585.—Bethany.
Bethania.



586.—Raising of Lazarus. (Piombo.)
Adgyfodi Lazarus.



587.—Interior of a Rock Sepulchre.
Y Tu mewn i Graig-Feddrod.



589.—Christ answering the Pharisees concerning Divorcement.
Crist yn ateb y Phariseaid mewn perthynas i Ysgariad.



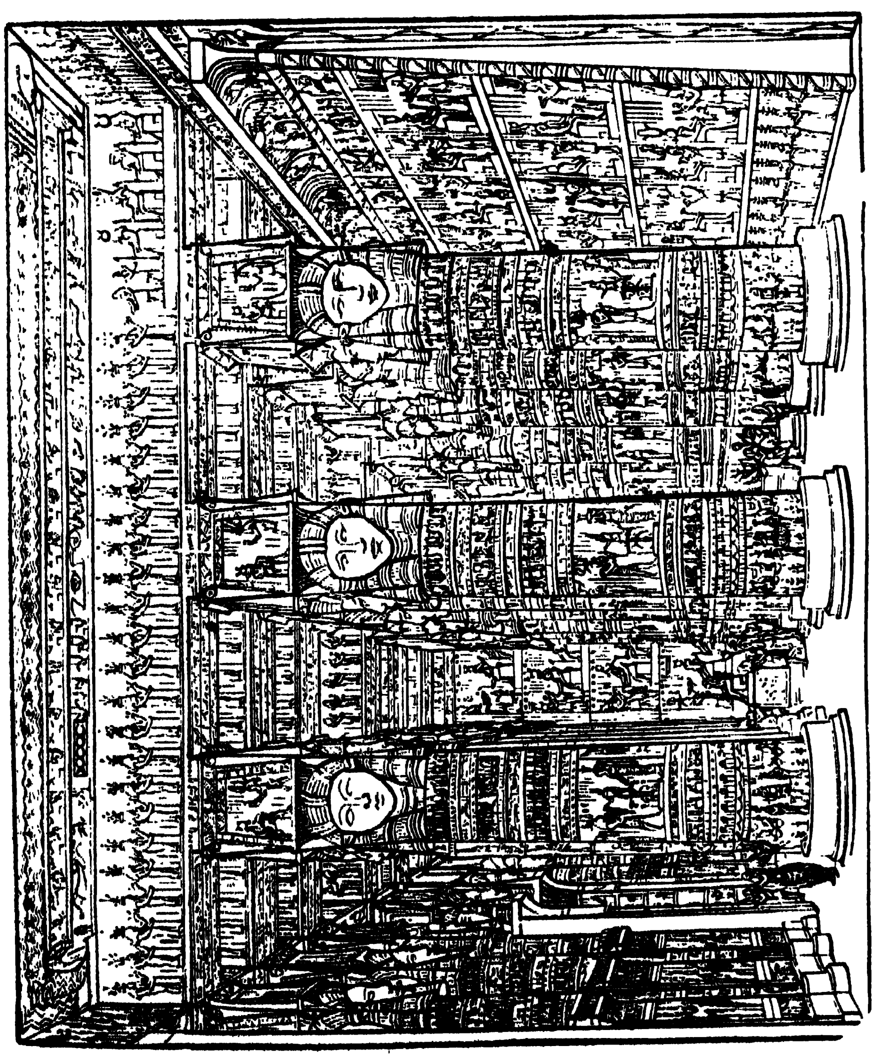
588.—Interior of the Tomb of the Kings, at Jerusalem.
Y Tu mewn i Feddrod y Brenhinoedd, yn Jerusalem.



591.—A Seraph.



590.—Vision of Ezekiel. (Raffaelle.)
Gweledigaeth Ezeciel.



593.—"Chambers of Imagery."—Ezek. viii. Interior of the Portico of the Great Temple of Denderah.
"Y Delw-Gelloedd." Y Tu mewn i Borth Teml Fawr Denderah.



592.—Ezekiel.—From the Frescoes in the Sistine Chapel, by M. Angelo.
Ezeciel.—O'r Iriiwiau yn y Capel Sistinaidd, gan M. Angelo.

SUNDAY XXIV.—THE PROPHET EZEKIEL.



THE third of the great prophets was Ezekiel, the son of Buzi, a descendant of Aaron, of the tribe of Levi, and therefore of the sacerdotal race. He is said to have been a native of Sarara, and to have been carried away captive at the age of thirteen to Babylon with Jehoiachin, king of Judah, B.C. 599. He settled or was placed, with many others of his captive countrymen, on the banks of the Chebar, a river of Mesopotamia, where he was favoured with the Divine revelations which are described in this book. He is supposed to have prophesied during a period of twenty-one years; beginning to deliver his prophecies eight or ten years before Daniel, in the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity, and, as some have supposed, in the thirtieth year of his age. Thus Ezekiel in Mesopotamia did, during a very important period, prophesy contemporaneously with Jeremiah in Judæa; but he began his prophecies later and continued them longer than Jeremiah. As the predictions of the prophets, so distant from each other, referred in a very considerable degree to the same events, and were mutually corroborative, it is not unlikely, as Jerome conjectures, that the prophecies of Jeremiah were sent to Mesopotamia, and those of Ezekiel to Judæa, to give encouragement and confidence to the exiled Jews on the one hand, and on the other to reprove and leave without excuse those who remained in their own country. It deserves to be particularly remarked that we are informed by Josephus that the prophecy in which Ezekiel foretold that King Zedekiah should not see Babylon, though he should die there (chap. xii. 13), was deemed by the monarch inconsistent with that of Jeremiah, who predicted that Zedekiah should see the king of Babylon, and go to Babylon (Jer. xxxiv. 3). But both were exactly fulfilled: for Zedekiah did see the king of Babylon at Riblah, and there being deprived of his eyes, he was carried to Babylon and died there. Ezekiel is reported by some writers to have presided in the government of the tribes of Gad and Dan in Assyria, and among other fabulous miracles to have punished them for idolatry by a visitation of fiery serpents. In addition to these popular traditions, it is reported that his countrymen were so incensed by his reproaches as to put him to a cruel death. In the time of Epiphanius it was superstitiously believed that his remains were deposited in the same sepulchre with those of Shem and Arphaxad, which was supposed to be situated between the river Euphrates and the Chaboras; and which was much resorted to not only by the Jews, but also by the Medes and Persians, who reverenced the tomb of the prophet with extravagant devotion. The Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela, who visited the place in A.D. 1173, gives a curious account of it, and of the synagogue connected with it. "This place is considered holy even to the present day, and is one of those to which people resort from remote countries in order to pray, particularly at the new year and the day of atonement. Great rejoicings take place there about this time, which are attended even by the Prince of the Captivity and the presidents of the Colleges at Bagdad. The assembly is so large, that their temporary abodes cover twenty-two miles of open ground, and attract many Arabian merchants, who keep a market or fair. On the day of the atonement the proper lesson for the day is read from a very large manuscript Pentateuch of Ezekiel's hand-writing. A lamp burns day and night in the sepulchre of the prophet, and has always been kept burning since the day he lighted it himself. A large house belonging to the sanctuary contains a very numerous collection of books, some of them as ancient as the second, some even coeval with the first, temple, it being the custom that whoever dies childless bequeaths his books to the sanctuary. The inhabitants of the country lead to the sepulchre all foreign Jews who come from Media and Persia, to visit it in consequence of vows which they have taken. The noble Mohammedans also resort thither to pray, because they hold the prophet Ezekiel, upon whom be peace! in great veneration: and they call this place Dar Malicha. The sepulchre is also visited by all devout Arabs. Even in time of war neither Jew nor Mohammedan ventures to spoil or profane the sepulchre of Ezekiel."

The tomb still subsists on the road from Babylon to Meshid Ali. It is a large clumsy building without beauty or ornament, and is still much frequented by Jewish pilgrims.

Ezekiel appears to have been mercifully raised up to animate the despondency of his contemporaries in their sufferings and afflictions: and to assure them that they were deceived in supposing, according to the representations of false prophets, that their countrymen who remained in Judea were in happier circumstances than themselves. With this view he describes the melancholy scene of calamities which was about to arise in Judea; and thence proceeds to predict the universal apostacy of the Jews, and the total destruction of the city and temple. This is the general subject of the twenty-four first chapters. The eight chapters following embrace prophecies against the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Philistines, Tyrians, Sidonians, Egyptians, and Babylonians. These prophecies respecting foreign nations, besides the conclusive evidence which they, by their accomplishment, furnish to all ages of the Divine authority by which the prophets spoke, were, by the speedy accomplishment of many of them, well calculated to assure the Hebrews of the certain fulfilment of those other prophecies in which they were themselves more immediately interested. From the thirty-second to the fortieth chapter the prophet inveighs against the hypocrisy and murmuring spirit of his captive countrymen. Having heard in Assyria of the fall of Jerusalem, he foreshows further inflictions of the Divine wrath (xxx. 21—29), but encourages the people to resignation by promises of deliverance (xxxvi. 11; xxxvii. 12, 14, 21), by assurances that they should be corrected (as they effectually were) from their propensities to idolatry, and by intimations of spiritual redemption (xxxiv. 4, 23, &c.; xxxvii. 24, &c.), and a renewal of the whole nation as by a resurrection from the grave (xxxvii.). In the two last chapters of this division, under the proposed victories to be obtained over Gog and Magog, the prophet appears to predict some fearful conflicts which are to precede the final return of the Jews from their dispersion in the latter days, with a degree of obscurity, however, which can only be dispersed by the event. The eight last chapters of the book detail the description of a very remarkable vision of a new temple and city; of a new religion and polity, under the particulars of which appears to be shadowed out the establishment of a future universal church.

The visions of Ezekiel, particularly those with which his book opens and closes, have always been regarded by both Jews and Christians as very mysterious and of difficult interpretation,—so much so indeed, that the former anciently forbade either of these visions to be read by persons under thirty years of age. Ezekiel himself was well aware of the mysterious character of those representations which he beheld in vision, and of the necessary obscurity which must attend the description of them to others, humbly representing to God that the people accused him of speaking darkly "in parables."

Bishop Lowth, with his usual animation, thus describes the style of this prophet:—"Ezekiel is much inferior to Jeremiah in elegance; in sublimity he is not even excelled by Isaiah: but his sublimity is of a totally different kind. He is deep, vehement, tragical: the only sensation he affects to excite is the terrible: his sentiments are elevated, fervid, full of fire; his imagery is crowded, magnificent, terrific, sometimes almost to disgust; his language is pompous, solemn, austere, rough, and at times unpolished: he employs frequent repetitions, not for the sake of grace or elegance, but from the vehemence of passion and indignation. Whatever subject he treats of, that he sedulously pursues, from that he rarely departs, but cleaves as it were to it; whence the connection is in general evident and well preserved. In many respects he is perhaps excelled by other prophets; but in that species of composition to which he seems by nature adapted, the forcible, the impetuous, the great and solemn, not one of the sacred writers is superior to him. His diction is sufficiently perspicuous; all his obscurity is in the nature of his subject." This, it must be confessed, is a more favourable account of this prophet's style than some other writers are willing to admit. De Wette, in particular, alleges, that "the prophetic style is with him sunk down to low, tedious, and dull prose," &c. Much of these fine distinctions about style are, however, only appreciable by Hebrew scholars; and it is well to end such remarks by the wise caution of Archbishop Newcome—that "the holy prophet is not to be regarded merely as a poet, or as the framer of those august and astonishing visions, and of those admirable and poetical representations which he committed to writing, but as an instrument in the hands of God, who vouchsafed to reveal himself through a long succession of ages, not only in divers parts constituting a magnificent and uniform whole, but also in divers manners, as in a voice, by dreams, by inspiration, and by plain or enigmatical vision."

SUNDAY XXIV.—BIBLE HISTORY.

ALTHOUGH Jephthah knew that Jehovah was the God of Israel, and that he alone ought to be worshipped by his people; he had but confused notions even on this point, for in his message to the Ammonites he appears to recognise Chemosh as their god in the same sense in which Jehovah was the God of Israel. He seems to have thought it enough to worship the Lord in the same way that other nations worshipped their gods, and to have supposed that what they deemed invaluable could not be otherwise to Him. We know that in after-times human sacrifice was practised in Israel in the face of far greater light than existed in the generation to which Jephthah belonged, and in the presence of the temple and altar of Jehovah: and knowing this, it does afford just ground for surprise that there should have been so much hesitation felt in allowing that a rough soldier, living in an idolatrous age, and in a part of Israel less than any other open to the influence of the theocratical institutions, should have deemed himself bound by the obligations of his vow to immolate his daughter. That the deed was unlawful is very certain: but it is not the less probable on that account. It is, however, a monstrous conception of the painters and others that the high-priest was the sacrificer, and that the sacrifice was made at the altar of the Lord. The awful deed was probably perpetrated at some old altar in the country beyond the Jordan, and there is much reason to apprehend that Jephthah himself struck the blow which left his own heart desolate.

It is singular that the victory of Jephthah over the Ammonites was followed by a misunderstanding with the powerful tribe of Ephraim, similar to that which had followed the victory of Gideon over the Midianites. This tribe seems never to have perceived that its assistance could have been of use until the occasion for taking the field had passed away and the enemy was completely routed; and then it came forward with complaints that it had not obtained a share of the honour and the spoil. Gideon had pacified them with one of those soft answers which turn away wrath: the sterner Jephthah tried the same treatment; but having less self-control, he allowed their gross insults to rouse his anger, and he took prompt and skilful measures for making them repent of their offensive movements. They had crossed the Jordan in arms, and were bent on mischief; and Jephthah, who had at first been disinclined to come to blows, no longer hesitated to give them battle. They were utterly routed, and when those who had escaped the battle-field attempted to recross the river into their own country, they found the fords in the hands of the men of Gilead, who hit upon an ingenious contrivance for distinguishing them as Ephraimites, which they could not have done by their persons or attire. It seems that they were unable to pronounce the Hebrew *sh*, but gave it the sound of *s*. This amounted to something like the difference in our provincial dialects; but seems more remarkable in so small a country as Palestine. All the men who came to the river, were required to pronounce the word *Sh*ibboleth (a *stream*), and if they gave it as *S*ibboleth, were smitten down as Ephraimites.

The victories of Gideon and of Jephthah appear to have secured a long period of tranquillity to the Israelites; for the historian records little more than the names of the three following judges. Jephthah died after having ruled Israel six years. After him was Ibzan of Bethlehem, who was the parent of thirty sons and as many daughters. He ruled seven years; and after him came Elon, who ruled ten years; and he was followed by Abdon, who during eight years judged Israel. Abdon must have been a man of wealth and distinction, for he had forty sons and thirty nephews "who rode upon three-score and ten ass-colts."

It required no long course of prosperity to corrupt the Israelites, and to turn them aside from that God to whom they were indebted for it. The reader of Scripture is so accustomed to this, that he only wonders at the unusual duration of some of the intervals of faithfulness and rectitude. They now sinned once more, and were brought very low under the yoke of the Philistines, which lay heavy on them for forty years.

The deliverer whom God next raised up to redress the wrongs of the chosen people, was, in many respects, the most extraordinary personage who appears in the more ancient Hebrew history, and whose course of proceeding it appears most difficult to reconcile with our notions of a divine commission and a theocratic government. This was SAMSON, who was born about the time this servitude commenced; and who about the middle of it was in a condition to act upon the high commission which he so imperfectly fulfilled, and to exercise the marvellous gifts which his low vices so often deprived of the effects for which alone they had been entrusted to him.

His birth was by a miracle. His parents were childless; and the mother ceased not to importune God to release her from this comfortless and almost infamous condition: the prayer was heard. An angel announced to her that she should be the mother, not only of a son, but of a deliverer to Israel; and it was directed that he should be regarded as a Nazarite from the birth, wearing his hair for ever unshorn, and abstaining from wine and strong drink. The father was not present at this interview. His name was Manoah, an inhabitant of Zorah, a small town of the tribe of Dan, to which he belonged. Manoah was astonished at the tidings which his wife imparted to him, and prayed that he might also be privileged to receive the assurance from the same heavenly messenger. The angel accordingly re-appeared to both the destined parents, and a scene took place not unlike that which had formerly attended the angel-visit to Gideon. Manoah, as directed, offered a kid with a meat offering upon the rock, and as the flame went up towards heaven, the angel disappeared from their view in the rising flame.

The child in due time was born, the name of Samson was given to him, and he was brought up as a Nazarite. He was then found to be endowed with strength greatly beyond that of the sons of men, and which was destined to become the instrument through which he, as the champion of the Lord's people, was to work for the deliverance of Israel. He early sought for opportunities of signalizing his valour and uncommon strength against the enemies of his country; and, ere long, his personal achievements appear to have attached to his name such a degree of notoriety, as to render him an object of dislike and terror to the inhabitants of the Philistine border. In was, in fact, his vocation to "find occasion" against the Philistines, which might enable him to exert his mighty powers to their detriment; by which their power might be weakened and their plans confused, without exposing his own nation to responsibility for his acts. The time for the full deliverance of Israel was not then come: it was the task of Samson to "begin" that deliverance by weakening the power and resources of the Philistines by such acts as centred their attention on himself personally. To fulfil this his destiny, it came to pass that he, while still a youth, fell in love with a Philistine damsel of Timnath. The parents, who did not know that this attachment "was of the Lord," objected to his marriage with an idolater, when there were so many fair damsels in Israel well suited to his choice. But finding his resolution fixed, they reluctantly agreed to go with him to Timnath to ask the damsel in marriage.

The necessary preliminaries being settled, the marriage was solemnized with feasting, which, according to the custom of the time, lasted seven days. It was usual on such occasions for the bridegroom to invite a number of his relatives and friends, who were to do the honours of the ceremony, and to perform other duties arising from the occasion. In this case, however, thirty Philistines were assigned to Samson as companions, either from his being distant from his own home, or, more probably, for a check upon a person so dangerous and formidable. It was usual in those days for the guests assembled at such feasts to exercise their wit in proposing and solving enigmas and riddles: and in compliance with this custom, Samson put forth a riddle, and proposed thirty dresses as the forfeit to be given by him if they solved it within seven days, or by them if they failed to do so. The riddle was—

> "Out of the eater came forth meat,
> And out of the fierce came forth sweetness."

It was founded on an adventure which befel him in one of his journeys to Timnath, when he slew a young lion, in the dry hide-bound skeleton of which he afterwards found a swarm of bees and a quantity of honey. The solution of this riddle was beyond the skill of the Philistines; but being unwilling to seem outwitted or to incur the expensive forfeiture, they beset the bride, and by threatenings induced her to solicit from him the solution, which she imparted to them, and they were thus enabled on the seventh day to answer,—

> "What is fiercer than a lion,
> And what is sweeter than honey?"

Samson took no pains to conceal his disappointment and suspicion; and he made it an occasion for exercising the powers with which he had been gifted for the avengement, if not the deliverance, of his people. He went down to Askelon, and slew thirty Philistines, whose blood-stained raiment he brought to Timnath, and gave to their countrymen, as the forfeit of his riddle. Then, in deep disgust at the part taken by his wife, and probably suspicious of her fidelity in other respects, he returned to his paternal home,



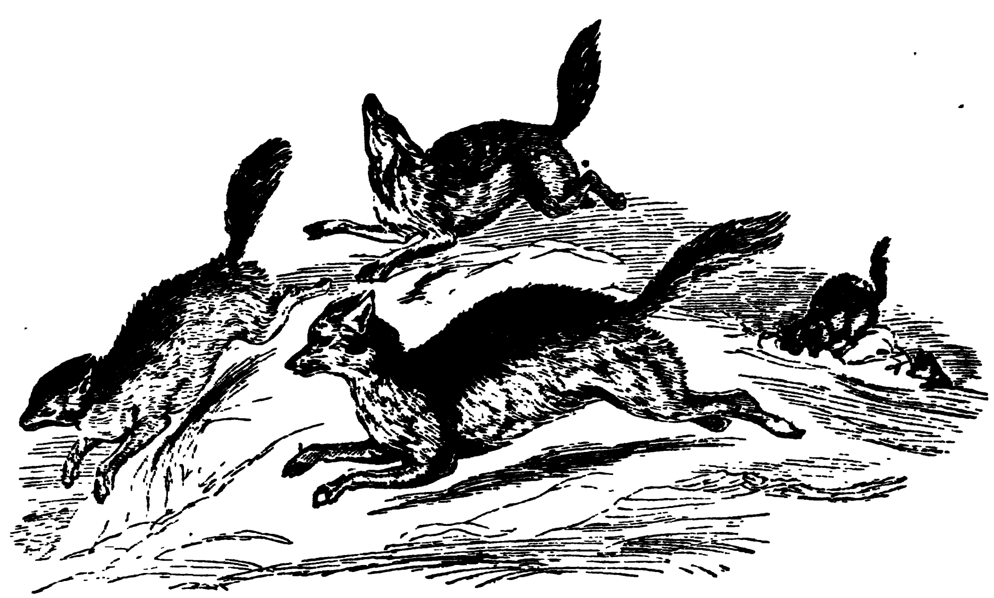
597.—Samson and Delilah. (Ruben[illegible])—Jud[illegible]
Samson a Delilah.



594.—Manoah and the Angel. (Solimene.)—Judg. xiii.
Manoah a'r Angel.



595.—Samson giving the Honey to his Father. (Domenichino.)—Judg. xi[illegible]
Samson yn rhoddi y Mêl i'w Dad.



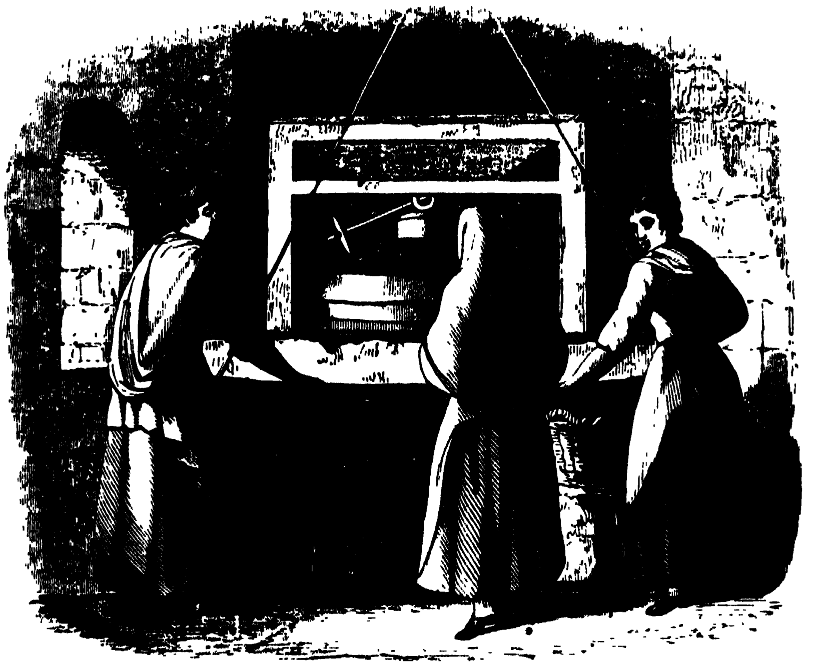
596.—Jackals ("Foxes").—Judg. xv.
Jaccalod ("Llwynogod").



599.—Palace of the British Envoy at Teheran.
Palas y Cennadwr Brutanaidd yn Teheran.



600.—Supporting Pillars of Eastern Buildings.
Colofnau Cynhaliol mewn Adeiladau Dwyreiniol



601.—Women grinding in a Mill
Gwragedd ym malu mewn Melin.



598.—Death of Samson. (Hoet.)—Judg. xvi.
Marwolaeth Samson.



602.—Gaza.

leaving her with her friends. But after a while, his heart relented, and he again went down to Timnath, to see his wife: and found that she had during his absence been bestowed in marriage upon the chief of the young men (the paranymph—"the friend of the bridegroom") who had been his companions at the wedding feast, and who had behaved so scandalously to him. This was not only a great wrong in itself, but afforded confirmation to his former suspicions. His wrath therefore rose very high, and he made this another occasion of vengeance against the Philistines. This vengeance was exercised in a very singular manner. He caught three hundred foxes (or jackals), and coupling them together, fastened burning fusees between the tails of each couple, and in this manner set them loose among the standing corn of the Philistines, which was thus at once set on fire in many different quarters. The flames at that season of the year spread so rapidly and widely among the standing crops and the vineyards, as to cause a most extensive and ruinous destruction.

Some exceptions have been taken to this transaction, on the score of the difficulty of catching so many as three hundred foxes. But jackals, not foxes, are usually denoted; and as they are gregarious, the number might, without insuperable difficulty, have been caught by Samson and other persons employed by him for the occasion. Jackals would also answer the purpose better than foxes, which would have fled immediately to their holes, and not have wandered about the fields of the Philistines.

When the author and occasion of this great calamity became known to the Philistines, they resolved to remove at once the cause of his anger rather than expose themselves to the repetition of such attacks; and they therefore went to Timnath and destroyed by fire the parties of whom Samson had so much cause to complain. But this was not the way to pacify the Jewish hero, who no sooner heard of it, than he fell upon a band of their countrymen, and vanquished them with much slaughter. He then, foreseeing the consequences, withdrew to the top of the almost inaccessible rock Etam, in the tribe of Judah.

The Philistines do not appear to have regarded these feats of Samson as acts of war or revolt on the part of the Hebrews; their attention was fixed upon the person of the hero; and now finding, by dear experience, that his enmity was as implacable as his strength was great, they determined by one great stroke to put an end to the vexatious warfare which he carried on upon their borders. They therefore marched a body of troops into Judea with the intention of seizing this eagle in the eyry to which he had fled, and established a regular encampment in the neighbourhood, with the view, apparently, of starving him into a surrender. The men of Judah were alarmed at these proceedings, and dreaded the consequences which the hero's acts seemed likely to bring upon their own heads. They, therefore, went and remonstrated with him, hinting their wish that he would allow himself to be delivered up as a pledge and security of future peace. After some hesitation he consented, so far as to allow them to bind him and conduct him to the presence of the enemy. But no sooner did he come before them, and while their triumphant shout rose high in air, than the supernatural spirit was roused within him; he burst the strong cords that bound him as if they had been burnt tow, and seizing the first weapon which came to hand, which was the jawbone of an ass, he flew upon the host and slew a thousand men therewith.

The hero then threw away his strange weapon, from which he called the name of the place Ramath-lehi (the lifting up of the jaw-bone). But he was sore athirst, and cried to God, "Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant, and now I shall die for thirst, and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised." It is added that "God clave a hollow place that was in the jaw, and there came water thereout; and when Samson had drunk he revived; wherefore he called the name thereof En-hakkore, which is in Lehi unto this day." A difficulty is here occasioned by the circumstance that the word *lehi* denotes both a place and a jaw-bone; and the question hence arises, whether the water which quenched the thirst of Samson came from a hollow in the jaw (*lehi*) itself, or from the ground in the place to which that name (*Lehi*) had been given by the hero, and by which it was known when the author of the book of Judges wrote; the latter seems the more likely conclusion, and is that which modern commentators usually follow.

Not long after having committed this slaughter among the Philistines, Samson, with marvellous hardihood, ventured to go to Gaza, one of their fortified cities, and there took up his abode with a harlot. He was not long permitted to remain in Gaza undisturbed, for the news of his arrival soon transpired, and a strong watch was set at the gate to arrest him when he should attempt to depart. But the hour of their triumph was not yet come; for, being made acquainted with this movement on the part of the Philistines, he arose at midnight, and not content with bursting open the gates, he wrenched them away, posts, bars, and all, and bore them off upon his shoulders to the top of a hill about two miles from Gaza on the road to Hebron.

Samson was, however, at length betrayed into the power of his enemies by a woman named Delilah, for whom he entertained a base affection. The lords of the Philistines no sooner heard of this unhappy connection than they resolved to employ this woman as the instrument of his destruction. They promised her large sums of money to induce her to employ all her insinuations to find out the cause of his supernatural strength, which they manifestly supposed to depend on some peculiar observance, which if he might be induced to neglect, his strength would fail him, and they might with impunity avenge themselves upon him. Accordingly Delilah employed all her arts to gain the desired information, and after many vain efforts Samson at length disclosed to her that he had been constituted by the Lord a perpetual Nazarite, which condition was betokened by the unshorn state of his hair; but that if he renounced the condition of a Nazarite by shaving his head, the spirit of the Lord, in which lay his great strength, would depart from him, and he should become as other men. In consequence of this disclosure she contrived, while he was asleep, to shave off his hair; and the Philistines, who were lying in wait, seized upon him, put out his eyes, and, placing him in strong fetters, carried him to Gaza, where he was confined in the prison-house, and made to grind at the mill like a slave.

Milton, in his 'Samson Agonistes,' which, apart from its poetical merits, is a beautiful and *critical* study of the life and character of the hero, thus pictures him in this condition:—

> "O change beyond report, thought, or belief!
> See how he lies at random, carelessly diffused;
> With languish'd head unpropt,
> As one past hope—abandon'd,
> And by himself given over;
> In slavish habit, ill-fitted weeds
> O'er-worn and soiled:
> Can this be he,
> That heroic, that renowned,
> Irresistible Samson?"

Some time after this the lords of the Philistines assembled to hold an annual festival in honour of their idol Dagon. Having met in the house or temple of that idol, it occurred to them, to enhance their gladness, and the glory of their god, by the sight of their captive in his misery, and his abject condition. He was accordingly sent for, and was placed in the area or enclosed court of the building, the flat roof of which was crowded with the Philistines, who made him the object of their mockery and sport. His hair had, however, begun to grow again, and with its growth he felt the consciousness of returning strength. In this consciousness he desired the lad who led him about to let him rest against the central pillars, upon which the main weight of the building rested. This being granted, the blind hero breathed a prayer to the Lord to strengthen him, that he might be once more avenged of the Philistines; and laying hold of the two pillars shook them with such violence, that "the house fell upon the lords and upon all the people that were therein: and the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life." Availing themselves of the consternation which this transaction occasioned in the place, the friends of Samson came down, and extricating his body from the ruins, bore it away, and buried it between Zorah and Eshtaol, in the sepulchre of his father Manoah.

> "God of our fathers! what is man,
> That thou towards him with a hand so various,
> Or might I say contrarious,
> Temper'st thy providence through his short course,
> Not evenly, as thou rulest
> The angelic orders, and the inferior creatures mute,
> Irrational and brute?
> Nor do I name of men the common rout,
> That, wandering loose about,
> Grow up and perish, as the summer-fly,
> Heads without name, no more remembered;
> But such as thou hast solemnly elected,
> With gifts and graces eminently adorn'd,
> For some great work, thy glory,
> And people's safety, which in part they effect:
> Yet towards these, thus dignified, thou oft
> Changest thy countenance, and thy hand, with no regard
> Of highest favours past
> From thee on them, or them to thee of service!"
>
> *Samson Agonistes.*



The Raising of Lazarus.

St John XI. 40 to 44

SUNDAY XXIV.—LIFE OF CHRIST.



THEN Mary threw herself at his feet, and said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died!" When Jesus witnessed her tears, and the grief of the friends of Lazarus, who had followed her, he "groaned in his spirit and was troubled." He asked, "Where have ye laid him?" and, on beholding the grave of one to whom he was so much attached, Jesus wept. This display of natural emotion extorted from some of the Jews present the remark, "Behold how he loved him!" to which others added, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?" Heedless of these remarks, Jesus commanded the stone which closed the mouth of the sepulchre to be removed. The wealthy Jews had their graves in sepulchres hewn out of rocks, to which there were passages leading, and on each side of which niches or openings were cut in which the bodies of the dead were deposited. The stone at the entrance was never removed at the usual visits to the sepulchre, and only on extraordinary occasions. Martha, who now had lost all hope of recovering her brother, attempted to dissuade him from his supposed intention of entering the tomb, by observing that the corpse would by this time emit a tainted odour. Jesus answered, in slight reproof, "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" The stone was then removed; and Jesus cried aloud, "Lazarus, come forth." And the dead heard him. The grave could no longer hold him whom he called from it. Lazarus came forth, still wearing the bandages or grave-clothes in which the Hebrews enveloped the dead. These seem to have been wrapped around the limbs separately, as they did not prevent the movement which the Lord commanded.

The mixed emotions with which the re-appearance of one so many days dead affected the sisters and friends of Lazarus and the disciples of Jesus, we must leave to the imagination of the reader, unless so far as they are demonstrated by subsequent events, for the act was too stupendous not to draw general attention, and, in the actual state of public feeling towards Christ, to be attended with important consequences. It was also performed in the immediate vicinity of the metropolis, and upon a person who appears to have been well known. Most of the Jews present, overcome by this exhibition of Divine power, believed in Jesus as the Messiah, but there were some whose sense being alienated from Divine things, would not acknowledge it, but went away and gave a perverted account of the transaction to the Sanhedrim. This assembly, the high spiritual council of the Jews, held its meetings in the stone hall of the Temple, and, when full, consisted of seventy-one members, although twenty-three sufficed for the transaction of business. The council was much alarmed at the report of the resurrection of Lazarus. They could not deny that Jesus ("*this man*," as they contemptuously described him) had actually wrought miracles; but in their exasperation and prejudice against one who taught doctrines so opposite to their own practices and expectations, they allowed this circumstance to weigh little with them. But this conviction obliged them to take a fresh ground for their hostility against him. If his party prevail, they said, he will excite political commotions, which will result in bringing down upon us the deprivation of the privileges which the Romans have left to us. This was probably no other than an ostensible pretext for the course they then began to contemplate; for the purpose of silencing the minority in the Sanhedrim which thought favourably of Jesus, and which had already caused its voice to be heard. It is impossible that this view could have been taken in sincerity; for Jesus never affected an earthly kingdom, or inculcated any principles likely to lead to revolt or tumult: whereas the Jews themselves desired nothing better than to find in the Messiah one who would have led them on to shake off the hateful yoke of the Romans; and if Jesus had appeared in that character, would have received him and followed him. It was now, however, determined to lose no time in bringing about the death of Jesus on the ground which had thus been taken; and in regarding their ensuing conduct as the effect of this design, the reader will be better able to apprehend the connection of the incidents which compose the closing scenes of the Redeemer's life.

Jesus himself, being aware of this design, withdrew with his disciples to Ephraim, a small city a few miles to the east of Jerusalem, in what was called the wilderness of Judea (John xi.); whence he is supposed, from Matt. xix. 1, to have soon returned to the parts beyond the Jordan from which he had lately come. Here, as usual, he was attended by large numbers of people, whom he taught, and the diseased among whom he healed. He was here among a well-disposed people; and on one occasion many mothers brought their children that he might bestow his blessing on them.

Jesus had been speaking against the practice of divorce, which was then very common among the Jews, and the disciples being apparently anxious to put some questions to him on a subject which interested them greatly, were disposed to repel the women and their children in the attempt to approach him. They may also have apprehended lest their master, who was engaged in so great a crowd, might be too much harassed. But the benign Saviour called to them, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." He then took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

Then, or soon after, our Lord illustrated the proposition, "Many that are first shall be last, and the last first," by the striking parable of the householder who early in the morning went out into the market-place to hire labourers for his vineyard, and agreed with them for the wages of a denarius (about seven-pence halfpenny) a day. At the third hour he hired others, promising to give them what was right; and so again at the sixth hour, the ninth hour, and even the eleventh hour. When they came to be paid, those who were hired last received a denarius, on which those who had been first hired and had laboured all the day expected to receive more. But the master reminded them of their contract for the day's wages, and asserted his own right to make the last comers equal to them in the reward of labour. By this, Jesus appears to have inculcated that God regards not how long a man works in spiritual things, but how well; and that ardour of intention and singleness of motive will often make the labour of one hour as valuable, in a moral calculation, as the ordinary labour of an entire day.

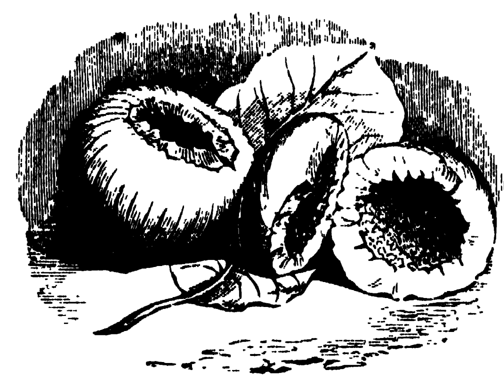
The time of the Passover now drew nigh, and Jesus set forth for Jerusalem, much to the consternation of the disciples, who expected the most disastrous results from the hostility and known designs of the Sanhedrim. But he told them plainly that his hour was now nigh at hand:—"Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the chief priests and to the Scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again." This they did not then understand. They understood the facts as stated. They could not misunderstand them; but they expected that the Messianic reign on earth with which their minds were filled would commence after the resurrection. This is shown by the petition which two, certainly not the least intelligent of Christ's apostles, namely, the sons of Zebedee, set their mother upon asking of him, "Grant that my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom." This amounted to a request that they might enjoy the first and second places among the subjects of his earthly kingdom, the degree of dignity being in Oriental courts denoted by proximity to the throne. Jesus, knowing that the application originated with James and John themselves, who had personally made a similar request at a former time, addressed them rather than their mother, saying, "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I shall be baptized with?" They answered promptly, "We are able." And he told them that they should indeed drink of his cup and be baptized with his baptism; but that the first and second places in his kingdom were not his to give. The ten other apostles felt much anger at this application by Zebedee's sons; but their master soothed them by pointing out the qualities by which true greatness in his kingdom was to be obtained. The transaction is of importance as showing the entire misconception concerning the nature of our Lord's kingdom under which the apostles still laboured. Their views as to the actual reign were not very different from those which others entertained; but they believed that Jesus was indeed the Messiah by whom these views were to be brought out. They also had modified notions as to the manner of his reign; for there can be no doubt that they applied to the conduct of his temporal kingdom, much which he intended to apply, and which we now apply, to his kingdom in the souls of men. It was left for a future day to correct all their erroneous notions, and to make plain all that they had previously misunderstood.



603.—Mourning Women.
Gwragedd Galarus.



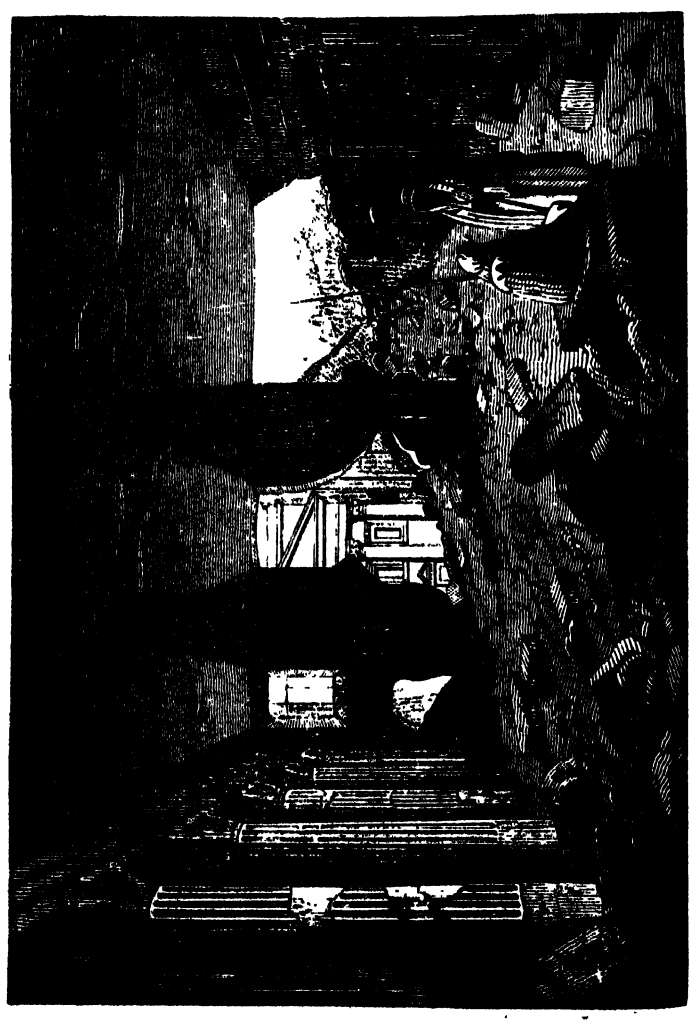
604.—Parable of Labourers in the Vineyard.
Dammeg y Llafurwyr yn y Winllan.



605.—Sycamore Figs.
Ffigys Sycamorwydd.



606.—Christ and little Children. (Overbeck.)
Crist a phlant Bychain.



607.—Interior of a Tomb at Petra
Y Tu mewn i Fedd yn Petra



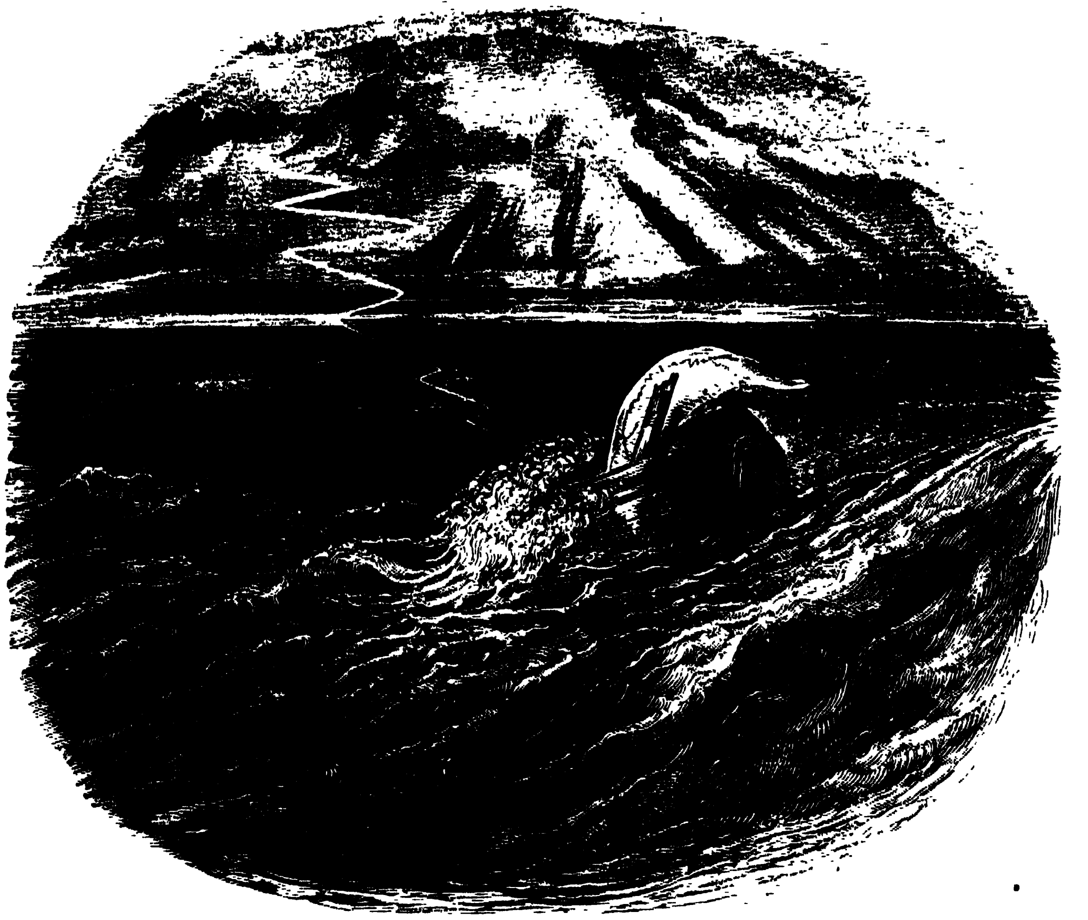
609.—Psalm cvi.



613.—Psalm cxix.



612.—Psalm cviii.



611.—"They are carried up to the heaven, and down again to the deep: their soul melteth away because of the trouble."—Psalm cvii. 26.

"Hwy a esgynant i'r nefoedd, disgynant i'r dyfnder: tawdd eu henaid gan flinder."



608.—Psalm cv.

GIVE thanks unto the Lord, and call upon his name.—1.

Even Joseph, who was sold to be a bond servant.—17.



610.—Psalm cvii.

GIVE thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious; for his mercy endureth for ever.—1.

He sent his word and healed them; and they were saved from their destruction.—20

SUNDAY XXV.—THE PSALMS.

ASAPH is named as the author of twelve of the Psalms. There seem to have been several persons of this name; but the one here intended was probably that distinguished Levite who appears in the character of David's master of song, and as a poet, with the honourable title of Seer, in 1 Chron. vi. 39; xv. 17; xvi. 5; 2 Chron. xxix. 30. With the exception of the 50th, and perhaps the 73rd, the Psalms ascribed to him can scarcely have been his, seeing that they contain marks of a later time, and allusions to later objects, events, and circumstances. Psalms lxxiv. and lxxix. describe the desolation of the temple and the city; Psalm lxxx. refers itself to the captivity; Psalm lxxvii. alludes to the later national calamities of the Hebrews, and already presupposes a division of the state. To judge from Psalms l. and lxxiii., Asaph was a master in didactic poetry, and the style and sentiments are equally admirable. If it were at all necessary to stand up for the claims of authorship advanced in the titles, it might, in the present case, be contended that the musical choir of Asaph's family composed in later days the Psalms which he could not have written, and deemed it an adequate distinction to set the name of their ancestor and founder to them. It might even be alleged that the allusions to later times were conceived in that prophetic spirit of which Asaph and other writers of the Psalms were undoubtedly possessed. If we could rely upon the titles, it would be right and necessary to take this course; but as we cannot do so, it would be altogether wrong to neglect the marks of time which the Psalms themselves afford. And this remark applies to all the other cases of disputable authorship.

The SONS OF KORAH, a Levitical family of singers, have eleven of the most beautiful of the Psalms ascribed to them (xlii., xliv.—xlix., lxxxiv., lxxxv., lxxxvii., lxxxviii.). These Psalms are distinguished for animated feeling, rapidity of movement, and loftiness of conception. But many have denied the claims of the Korahites to these Psalms, and imagine that they were only committed to them for the purpose of being set to music. Most of the Psalms belong to a later period, that is, to the captivity and the time immediately after the captivity, which is of course not an argument against the claim of authorship advanced for the sons of Korah, as the Levitical choirs established by David were preserved even to the time of the second temple.

HEMAN, the Ezrahite, is mentioned in the title of the 88th Psalm, and ETHAN, the Ezrahite, in that of the 89th. They are probably the same who are mentioned in 1 Chron. vi. 33, 44, as Levitical singers in the time of David; and perhaps, but more uncertainly, the same who in 1 Kings iv. 31, are celebrated for their wisdom. Both of these Psalms, at least the 89th, are obviously later than those names would indicate, and could not well have been written by contemporaries of David.

SOLOMON is named in the title of two of the Psalms (lxxii., cxxvii.), not, however, as the author, but as the subject of them.

The Septuagint names other authors besides these, as Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Haggai, and Zechariah, prol ·bly from conjecture merely: but it is supposed by some that these titles were not intended by the Seventy to designate the authors, but refer to the liturgical use for which these Psalms were supposed to have been selected by these prophets. Modern expositors have also attempted to ascertain the authors of many of the anonymous Psalms; but this is a matter attended with the greatest uncertainty. Thus from supposed internal evidence Psalm xlv. has been assigned to Mordecai, and xlvi. to Hezekiah; the first appears probable, as the contents of the ode would apply much more appositely to a Persian king than to Solomon, to whom it is usually supposed to refer.

We cannot better conclude these remarks on the authorship of the Psalms than in the words of Bishop Gray. "It is of less consequence to determine precisely by whom the Holy Spirit delivered these oracles, since we have indubitable evidence of the sacred character of the whole book; for it is collectively cited in Scripture (generally under the name of David), and is prophetical in almost every part; and several of the persons who are supposed to have contributed to the composition of the work are expressly represented as prophets in Scripture."

COLLECTION AND ARRANGEMENT OF THE PSALMS.

After so much consideration of the Psalms separately considered, the reader will be interested in knowing by what means these inimitable compositions became embodied in that collection or book in which they are now presented to us. On this point, as on most others connected with the Psalms, very different notions have been entertained. The allegation of the Talmud, that David was the collector of the Psalter, requires no refutation after the views which have been already taken. The Fathers of the Church and the old expositors ascribed the collection to Ezra, in conformity with the tradition that the final settlement and arrangement of the Old Testament canon was made by him. This opinion has been adopted by many modern commentators. But some of the most strenuous advocates of it have been forced to admit that, prior to this last and principal collection, and so early as the time of Hezekiah, a smaller collection was in existence, which comprised the first seventy-two Psalms, and concluded with the formula, "the Psalms of David are ended," which is still found at the close of the 72nd Psalm. Those who doubt that the general collection was formed by Ezra, also regard this formula as a proof that the seventy-two first Psalms once formed a collection by themselves, as it could not have proceeded from the author of the entire collection, because many Psalms of David appear among those that follow. It would seem that these last were not added until a late period; and the question is whether the additions were made in one, three, five, or more distinct collections. Those who hold that Ezra formed the general collection, and included the *one* previously made, adopt the first of these alternatives. But those who admit that there was one collection previous to that made by Ezra have no ground for denying that other collections may not also have existed. Some think that they can discover in the Psalms traces of three collections, formed at different times, and eventually combined into one. Others discover more; and Professor Jahn, who contends that the book of Psalms is the aggregate of five collections, advances the following very ingenious hypothesis on the subject:—

"In the five books of the Psalms, we have before us just so many distinct collections of Psalms, which were made in the same order in which they follow one another. It was the intention of the first collector to furnish exclusively songs of David; the second annexed his collection to that of the first, and intended to give the gleanings of David's songs, not hesitating, however, to introduce other songs in addition. The collector of the third book no longer had the songs of David particularly in view; and as he wished to annex his collection to the foregoing, he subjoined to the 72nd Psalm the formula signifying that the Psalms of David were ended. The fourth collector confined himself to anonymous effusions; hence he furnishes but one psalm of Moses and two of David (*i. e.* according to the existing titles). The fifth, lastly, brought together all the sacred songs which were yet to be found."

Whether the evidence can be regarded as supporting this conclusion in its full extent will still be disputed; but it goes far enough to show that the collection of the Psalms must have been gradually formed. There is a prevailing want of order in it: pieces of like character are not brought together; songs of David are found scattered in all the five books; those of Asaph are separated as widely from each other as those of the Korahites, &c. But, again, in the midst of this disorder we remark a certain order: the majority of David's Psalms stand together (Psalms iii.—xli.). It is so likewise with the songs of the Korahites, of Asaph, and the songs of Degrees; a circumstance which seems to evince that they were brought together from many separate collections. In this view we may also account for the fact that one Psalm occurs twice; Psalm xiv. is the same as Psalm liii.; but on this ground we cannot equally well account for the recurrence of separate portions of Psalms, of which there are several instances.

It is to be observed that this view is founded upon the admitted division of the Psalms into five books or sections, each of which ends with a doxology. The *first* ends with Psalm xli.; the *second* with Psalm lxxii.; the *third* with Psalm lxxxix.; the *fourth* with Psalm cvi.; and the last with Psalm cl.

This division is very ancient: it existed in the time of the Seventy, and the Fathers of the Christian Church were acquainted with it. The same reason was also anciently given for this division as is done by the present Jews,—that as everything is summarily repeated in the Psalms which appears in the Pentateuch, the entire work is divided, like a second Pentateuch, into the same number of books. This imagined imitation of the Pentateuch is, however, a supposition altogether too arbitrary.

SUNDAY XXV.—BIBLE HISTORY.

ELI, the high-priest, appears as the person who "judged Israel" after Samson. There are many who believe this to have been actually the case: but it is now more generally understood that the civil government of the Jews was administered by Eli from about the middle of the Philistine servitude, and throughout all the period in which Samson employed his strength on the western border against the oppressors of Israel. Under this view, that which seems to be the commencement of a new government after the death of Samson, appears to be no other than a continuance of that which existed in his lifetime. Under the operation of the constitution as established by Moses, the government naturally devolved on the high-priest, in the absence of any specially appointed judge; and therefore, instead of being surprised that the pontiff should in this instance have been also judge, we may rather wonder that this did not oftener occur.

It was during this administration of Eli, that the prophet Samuel was born under circumstances which seemed to point him out as one destined for great things in Israel. His father, named Elkanah, was a Levite residing at Ramathaim-zophim. This person had two wives, one of whom, Hannah, being childless, was subject to much insult from the other wife, who was more fortunate. Elkanah tenderly loved Hannah, and sought to comfort her: but she ceased not to regard a male child as the greatest of earthly blessings. They used to go regularly to Shiloh, to worship at the tabernacle, which was still in that place. In one year she there prayed with great fervency for this blessing, and vowed that in case it were granted to her, the child should be wholly given as a Nazarite to the Lord. As she prayed, her agitation was so manifest, that it attracted the notice of Eli, as "he sat upon a seat by one of the posts of the tabernacle:" and he hastily supposed that she was under the influence of strong drink. But she replied, "No, my lord, I am a woman of sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord;" on which the priest said, "Go in peace: the God of Israel grant thee the petition thou hast asked of him." The prayer of that afflicted woman was heard: a son was given to her, and she called his name Samuel. From that time Hannah went no more up to Shiloh till her son had been weaned, and was old enough to be taken to the tabernacle and left there. When this time came they all went up together, and, after the usual offerings, the now happy mother took her child and brought him before Eli. She reminded him of her former prayer, and now informed him, "For this child I prayed," and that having given him to the Lord, she had now come to perform her vow. She then gave utterance to her feelings in an exulting song, which forms a pleasing specimen of the sacred poesy of the age before David. She then departed, leaving the child at the tabernacle, who, as he grew up, was employed in such light duties as a child could discharge, and which Levitical lineage authorized him to perform. Hannah had other sons as well as daughters; but she failed not year by year to visit Shiloh, to embrace the son whom "she had lent unto the Lord."

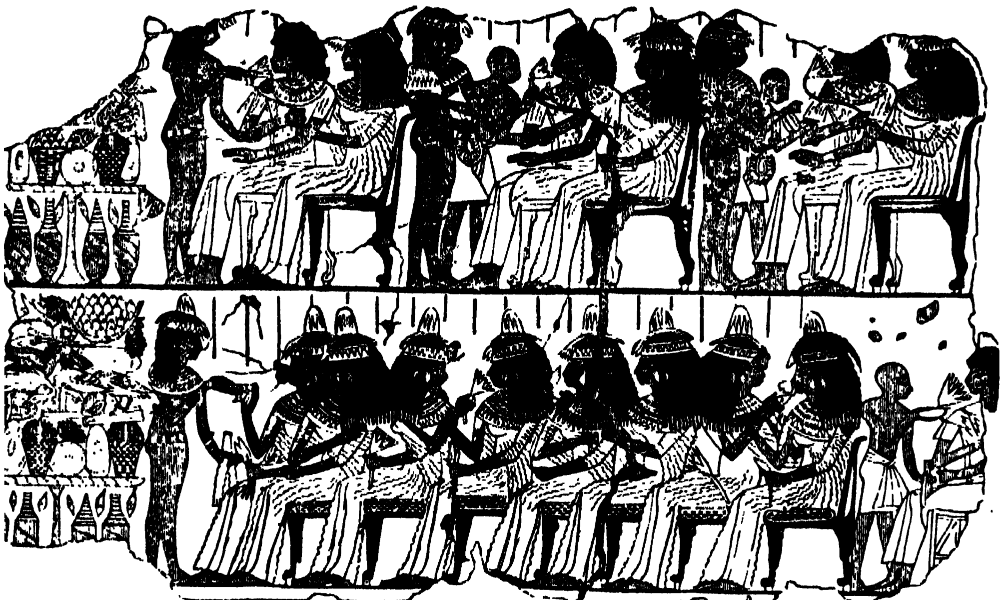
Eli himself was a man of undoubted piety, and of the most sincere intentions: but his sons, Hophni and Phinehas, proved worthless persons, who were guilty of the most criminal abuses of their priestly office. Their conduct became at length so utterly depraved and atrocious, that the people began to shun the attendances at Shiloh, which brought them in contact with persons who made their sacred office a cloak for all kinds of wickedness and wrong-doing. They were reproved by their father; but his reproof was too gentle, and unaccompanied by the strong measures of restraint which became his high and venerable office. As they continued their evil courses, a prophet was sent to Eli denouncing the punishments of heaven against them; predicting that Hophni and Phinehas should die "both in one day," and that, after Eli's death, the high priesthood should be rent from his family and bestowed upon another.

Meantime the young Samuel continued under the care of Eli, in the diligent discharge of the light duties confided to him, "ministering before the Lord, girded with a linen ephod." He was chiefly employed about the person of the aged high-priest, who became much attached to him. Once, when the lad was about twelve years of age, a voice called to him in the night, as he lay in a chamber near to and within call of that of the high priest. The boy supposed that Eli had called him, and hastened to receive his commands. But Eli had not called, and he was sent back to his couch. The voice again called, "Samuel, Samuel!" and the lad again hastened to Eli, with the same result. This being repeated a third time, the high-priest perceived that the call was supernatural, and told the lad that if the voice again called to him, he should answer, "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth." The child did so: and he then received a divine communication, to the same effect as that which the prophet had previously declared—"Behold," said the voice, "I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that day will I perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." Samuel lay quiet till the morning; and was afraid to impart to Eli the heavy tidings with which he had been charged. But on being pressed by his venerable patron, who knew that something unusual had transpired, he made all known to him. On hearing the awful message, the aged priest bent his venerable head, and said, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good."

From this time forward it became known that Samuel was a prophet favoured with revelations from God, which he made known to the people: and as for some time there had not been in Israel any person thus favoured—thus privileged with access to the counsels of the Divine King, the attention of all Israel was strongly drawn towards one who had, as it were, grown up under their eyes, in his constant attendance at the tabernacle.

During all this period, the Israelites appear to have been still under the oppression of the Philistines. In the fourth chapter of the first book of Samuel, we come abruptly to an account of warlike operations, without being able clearly to discern the object for which they were undertaken—whether from the desire of the Philistines to rivet more strongly the yoke of Israel, or from some attempt of the Israelites to shake it off. The first battle was fought at Aphek, and the Hebrews were routed with the loss of four thousand men. On this the Israelites took up the notion, that if the ark of God were brought into the field, they could not fail to be victorious over their enemies. They therefore sent for it to Shiloh; and it was brought to the army under the care of the sons of the high-priest, Hophni and Phinehas. When the sacred symbol entered the camp the whole army shouted for joy, as if already triumphant. The consternation of the Philistines was proportioned to the exultation of the Hebrews; and their feelings on this occasion enable us to perceive the estimation in which Jehovah was held by them, as the God of the Hebrews, which was the point of view in which he was regarded by them. They said: "Woe unto us! for there hath not been such a thing heretofore. Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hands of these mighty Gods? These are the Gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness!" Like valiant men, however, the Philistines did not permit this dread to discourage them; but rather regarded the greatness of the danger as an incentive to mightier exertions:—"Be strong, and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines, that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you. Quit yourselves like men, and fight!" The result read the Hebrews a terrible lesson of misplaced confidence upon mere symbols, which were as nothing apart from the living presence which the symbol represented. They were beaten; the ark of God was taken by the Philistines, and Hophni and Phinehas were killed in defending their sacred charge. By this one act, which made their death more worthy than their lives, they restore themselves, in some degree, to our good opinion; but it was no longer possible for any thing that they did or left undone to avert the ruinous effects of their former misdeeds, or to recall the doom which had gone forth from Heaven against them and theirs. They died, both in one day, as had been foretold: and if their friends could have had any comfort left, it must have been found in the fact that no shame, but honour rather, attended their last hour.

Meanwhile there were hearts at Shiloh that trembled for the fate of the battle, and for the ark of God. Among them was that of Eli; who, in his anxiety, caused his seat to be set by the way side that he might catch the tidings as they came. Tidings of evil are seldom long delayed. A fugitive speedily came from the battle-field with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head. He announced that Israel had fled before the Philistines—that Hophni and Phinehas were slain—and that—the ark of God was taken. At



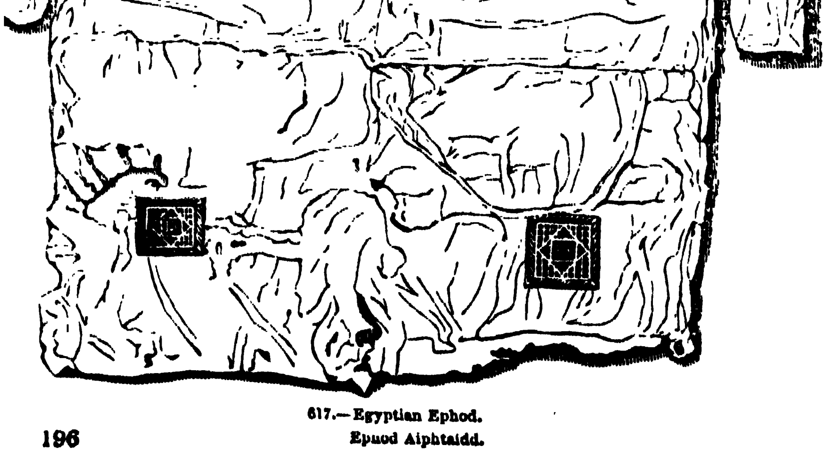
618.—Egyptian Entertainment, showing the Form of the Chairs. (From a Painting in the British Museum.)
Arlwyaeth Aiphtaidd, yn dangos Ffurf y Cadeiriau. (Arlun o Baentwaith yn yr Amgueddfa Brydeinig.)



615.—Young Samuel. (Reynolds.)
Samuel Ieuangc.



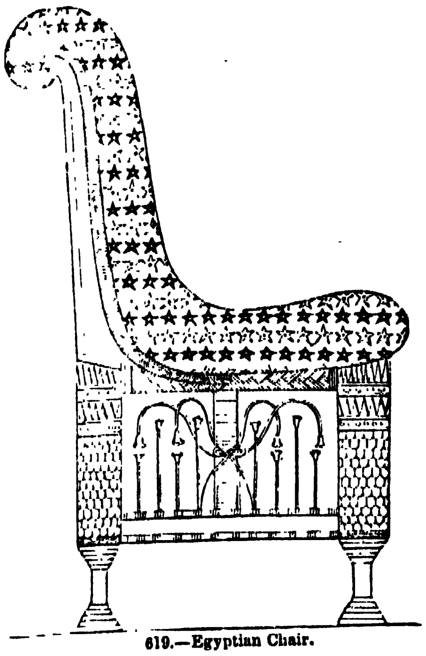
616.—Samuel and Eli. (Ludovico Carracci.)—1 Sam. ii.



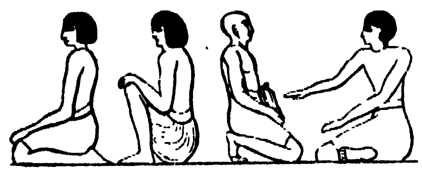
617.—Egyptian Ephod.
Ephod Aiphtaidd.



614.—Elkanah and Hannah before Eli. (Eeckhout.)—1 Sam. i.
Elcanah a Hannah ger bron Eli.



619.—Egyptian Chair.
Cadair Aiphtaidd.



620.—Various modes of Sitting.
Gwahanol ddulliau o Eistedd.



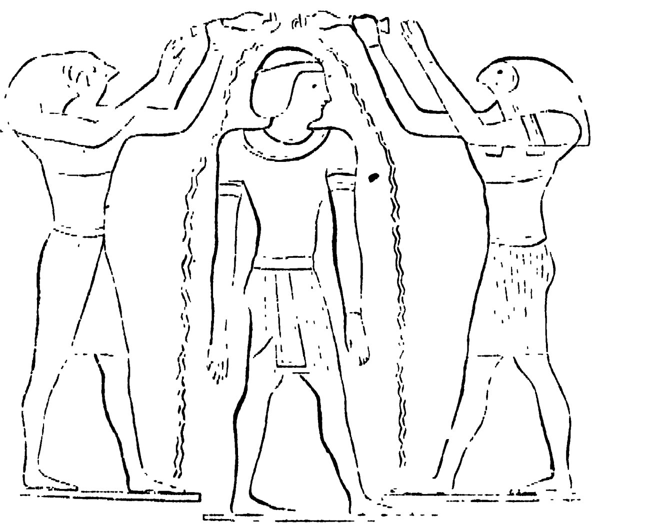
621.—Indian Car drawn by Oxen.
Cerbyd Indiaidd yn cael ei dynu gan Ychain.



622.—Turkish Arabah drawn by Oxen.
Ychain yn tynu Arabah Tyrcaidd.



624.—A Meeting near Mount Tabor.
Cyfarfyddiad ger llaw Mynydd Tabor.



625.—Egyptian Mode of Anointing.
Dull Aiphtaidd o Eneinio.



623.—Ethiopian Car drawn by Oxen.
Ychain yn tynu Cerbyd Ethiopaidd.



626.—Saul among the Prophets. (Hoet.)
Saul ym mysg y Prophwydi.

that terrible word, the blind old man fell down heavily from his seat, and his neck was broken in the fall.

The Philistines carried the ark with great triumph to Ashdod, and supposing that they had overcome the God of Israel by the mightier power of their own Dagon, they deposited it as a trophy of victory in his temple. It was the foresight of this triumph over the Lord of Hosts, which had occasioned the death of Eli, and filled Israel with dread. But it proved fatal to the Philistines and to their idol; for it then behoved the Almighty to vindicate the honour of his own great name from the triumph of the heathen. Accordingly it was found the next morning that the image of Dagon had fallen from its place, before the ark, and was broken in pieces.

They found their idol lying on the floor, prostrate before the ark of God. This might have been an accident, they thought; and therefore they again set up their monstrous idol more securely in its high place. But the next morning it had not only again fallen down, but was, once more, broken into pieces.

Next, the inhabitants of Ashdod were afflicted with a grievous disorder, the emerods (the piles), which was very general and intensely severe; this was accompanied by a plague of mice, by which the produce of their fields was consumed and spoiled. Taking these visitations in connection with the former event, they failed not to ascribe them to the wrath of the God of Israel, for the presence of his ark among them: and resolved to try whether he might not take more pleasure in some of their other cities. They therefore sent it to Gath, the inhabitants of which, being forthwith afflicted in the same manner, lost no time in forwarding it to Ekron; but the truth began by this time to be suspected, and the Ekronites received it with horror, and cried, "They have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to us, to slay us and our people." Nor were they mistaken in their anticipations, for there was soon a grievous destruction throughout the city, for "the hand of God was very heavy there." There could be no longer any reasonable doubt that the pestilence by which the Philistines were thus wasted was sent among them on account of the ark, and they resolved to restore it to the Israelites. Their priests recommended that an oblation, or trespass-offering, should be conveyed along with it, and, agreeably to the practice of those superstitious times, they further suggested that the gold of which this offering was to consist should be wrought up into figures having a direct reference to the evils with which they had been afflicted. They made five golden emerods and five golden mice, according to the number of the lords of the Philistines, and deposited them in a coffer which they placed beside the ark in the new car which they made for the purpose of conveying the sacred chest to its own land. It was usual for the heathen thus to convey their sacred arks and shrines, and they adopted it on this occasion, being ignorant that the Jewish law required the ark of God to be borne by the priests. To the ark they yoked two milch cows, which had not been accustomed to the draught, and which they left to take their own course. The cows, as if directed by a divine impulse, went direct towards the border village of Beth-shemesh in Judea, without once turning aside or attempting to go back, although their calves had been shut up at home. The villagers who were abroad in the fields employed on the crops hailed the return of the ark with the most unbounded joy; and concluding that on so remarkable an occasion they might dispense with the strict observance of the law, which forbade sacrifice to be made at any other place than that at which the tabernacle was fixed, they slew the two cows, and offered them up as a burnt-offering to Jehovah. This breach of a very stringent commandment, together with the irreverent curiosity which they manifested to examine the contents of the ark, occasioned the death of seventy persons; and by this the inhabitants were so terrified, that they besought the inhabitants of the neighbouring city of Kirjath-jearim to relieve them from the care of so formidable a deposit. The men of Kirjath-jearim complied with this request, and the ark was suffered to remain twenty years in this place before it was restored to the tabernacle at Shiloh.

This may perhaps be regarded as a neglect, and taken as one sign of the carelessness in the worship of God, and the observances of the law, which seems at this time to have been general in the land. But Samuel, who had successfully commenced a public reformation, proceeded from town to town throughout the whole land, to call the people to repentance, and to revive true religion among them; and his success was at length so great that the people, who had confusedly intermixed the worship of Jehovah with that of the idols of their neighbours, "put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the Lord only." Having brought the people to this frame of mind, Samuel convened a great assembly at Mizpeh, where, with suitable acts of humiliation, they confessed their sins, and Samuel prayed for them. It seems to have been on this occasion that Samuel, who hitherto had acted on his authority as a prophet, was formally recognised as chief magistrate and ruler of the people, and it is from this time that he is said to have "judged Israel."

The Hebrews were still under the yoke of the Philistines, whose watchfulness was alarmed at this public convention at Mizpeh; and they soon appeared in strong force to disperse the assembly. The Hebrews, who had then no war in their thoughts, were terrified at this demonstration: but, being encouraged by Samuel, they stood upon their defence, and in the battle which ensued were victorious over the Philistines, who were compelled to give up the cities they had taken from the Israelites, and to leave them their independence.

This great event completely established Samuel's influence over the people; and he took advantage of this to bring about a more complete reformation by going frequently about among them, attending to the affairs they brought before him, and exhorting them to continue steadfast in the worship and service of the Lord.

Many years passed peaceably and prosperously under the benign rule of Samuel, whose advancing years at length induced him somewhat to relax his labours, by associating his sons with him in the management of affairs. He then discontinued his circuits, and fixed his residence at Ramah, where he superintended the northern part of the land; while his sons, who established themselves at Beersheba, took charge of the southern districts.

The sons of Samuel grievously misconducted themselves in the high trust confided to them. "They walked not in his ways, but turned aside from hence, and took bribes, and perverted judgment." This, with the prospect of what might be likely to follow on the death of Samuel, gave the Israelites occasion to desire a king "to rule them like all the nations."

This was not the true remedy, to a nation privileged like theirs, for the evils which had grown up from neglect of the established principles of the theocratical constitution. They already had a king in the Lord, who dwelt, as it were, among them in his tabernacle, and had provided means for free access to his counsel in all difficulty, and had promised his Almighty aid in the redress of all their wrongs so long as they continued true in their allegiance. It was their own fault, if, by neglecting these high privileges, the theocratical government had seemed to become inefficient. The fact was, that through their unbelief, their low material notions, and their want of faith, the theocratical constitution had never been fairly worked since the time of Joshua, nor its suitableness for the general government of the nation had never since then, if even then, been adequately developed.

Samuel felt all this; and was well aware that they were actuated by an impatient and discontented spirit, and by a fondness for the imitation of the customs and institutions of the neighbouring nations, to the neglect of those peculiar institutions and peculiar privileges which distinguished them from all the nations of the earth. They were, in fact, tired of the theocratical government, under the forms in which it had been exhibited to them—those insufficient forms which it had assumed only through their own disloyalty to the Divine King, and their neglect of the first principles of the government which he had destined for them.

However, admitting the desire for the change to be wrong, the manner in which they sought to bring it about must be allowed to have been very regular and becoming. They did not set up a king for themselves; but applied to Samuel, that he, as the existing ruler, and as a prophet having access to the divine will, might nominate the most suitable person, and effect the change in the way that seemed best to him. It appears that they had made up their minds to have the change, but were very willing to leave the manner of the change to the existing authorities. This wise and virtuous procedure rendered this revolution—the greatest perhaps which could happen in any state—a most laudable example, in the peacefulness and legal solemnity with which it was effected.

Samuel would not venture to return a definitive answer to the demand of the people without first consulting the Lord, who was pleased to command him to protest most solemnly against the proposed change, and to declare in the strongest manner his reprobation of their rejection of himself as their king and governor. It was not hidden from them that their demand went to this extent, and involved this consequence. Yet nevertheless, if after this faithful representation of the case they persisted in their demand, the prophet was instructed to comply with their desires. This permission was obviously intended to keep them under some control, by preventing them from setting up a king of their own choice in direct opposition to a divine interdiction.

SUNDAY XXV.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

ON arriving at Jericho, which was then the second city of Judea, the people gathered in crowds to see him pass. Among them was the chief of the tax-gatherers, named Zaccheus, who being too short to see him in the crowd, in the intensity of his desire to view one of whom he had heard so much, mounted a sycamore-tree for the purpose. Jesus when he came to the place looked up, and called to him by name, "Zaccheus, make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house." Overwhelmed by an honour which he probably desired, but had not dared to ask, he left the tree and hastened home to receive his great guest, who alone of all the holy men of his age did not despise even the publicans. The mob as usual murmured at this preference; but Zaccheus, in the fulness of his heart and of his awakening convictions, stood forth and declared that from that hour he would bestow half his wealth to feed the poor, and would restore fourfold the wrong which any man could lay to his charge.

It was on this occasion that our Lord delivered the celebrated parable of the Talents. In those days, any person having claims by descent or interest to the sort of rayless crown which the Romans allowed some of their great vassals to wear, proceeded to Rome to have it confirmed to him. This had been done by Archelaus, the last native prince who had ruled in Judea. Jesus represents "a certain nobleman" as making such a journey "to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return;" and before his departure, confiding different sums of money to his servants, that they might employ it for his advantage till his return. They who had doubled the amount by trade during his absence, were rewarded with high trusts on his return. But one of them, who had received one talent, and had laid it up for safety, now produced it unimproved, and was met by reproaches and sent away with disgrace.

On leaving the city the next morning, a blind man, who sat begging by the way side, hearing the noise of the passing crowd, enquired what it meant; and being told that Jesus of Nazareth was going by, began to cry out, in his loudest voice, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me," till the Saviour heard him and stopped. When he was told of this, the blind man rose, and, in his eagerness, cast off his impeding outer garment as he hastened to the place where Jesus stood. On seeing him, Jesus asked, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" He answered, "Lord, that I might receive my sight." And Jesus had compassion upon him, and said, "Receive thy sight, thy faith hath saved thee." Here we have again a striking instance of an acknowledgment of Christ as the Messiah, in the very first cry of a blind man, in the epithet "thou son of David." And this faith—that Christ was the Messiah, and that he could restore his sight—was that to which the Lord referred.

It was customary for those who lay under ceremonial defilements to go up to Jerusalem earlier than others, that they might undergo the legal purifications before the commencement of the Passover. Those who were thus early at Jerusalem, as well as the residents, met together in the fore-courts of the temple, and speculated anxiously on the probabilities of our Lord's appearance at the feast. As he must have known of the resolution concerning him at which the Sanhedrim had now arrived, most people concluded that he would keep himself out of the way.

However, six days before the feast, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where he had lately raised Lazarus from the dead. Here he spent the remainder of the day, and the night. Many persons at Jerusalem having heard of his arrival at Bethany, went over in the hope of seeing him and the man he had raised from the dead together; and they were not disappointed, for Lazarus was among those who "sat at meat" with Jesus, at the supper which was that evening provided. The mention of this circumstance leads the Evangelist to record that many ruling men were so hardened as to meditate the death of Lazarus himself, on account of the attention drawn towards Christ by the presence and existence of a man he had raised from the dead.

As we might expect from our previous knowledge of the sisters Martha and Mary, they took very different parts in the entertainments of this remarkable evening. As women, they could not seat themselves at the table; but Martha, as usual, attended to the preparations of the supper, and busied herself in the outward service, while Mary surrendered herself to the full feeling of affectionate devotement to the Lord's person, rendered more lively and intense, we may well suppose, on account of her brother's resuscitation. She possessed a large quantity of costly ointment; and in order to testify her love, she sacrificed it all. She did what "the woman that was a sinner" had done before; she anointed his feet with the precious "nard," till the house was filled with the powerful fragrance. An objection to this act, as a wasteful extravagance, arose this time from no other personage than Judas Iscariot; and the Evangelist John neglects not the opportunity of connecting with this objection another trait in his character. He had already pilfered from the common fund of the disciples of Jesus, which had been confided to his charge; and hence the secret source of his discontent that Mary had not thrown the proceeds of her spikenard into the common treasury, if she desired to afford evidence of her love. Under an objection of ostensible worth, in which some well-meaning disciples concurred, he concealed his true character and disposition, which was apparent only to the Saviour, who answered by a touching justification of Mary's deed as a pre-anointing for his coming burial, followed by the pregnant remark—"The poor ye have always with you; but me ye have not always."

By the following morning it was well known in Jerusalem that Jesus would be that day in the city, and the people generally determined to give him a grand reception. Impure hopes may in part have prompted this course, and they may have expected that if a proof of attachment, of recognition, so public and so general, were exhibited, Jesus might be induced to appear openly as the King Messiah. A great multitude therefore went forth to meet him, with such demonstrations of honour as were anciently shown to Oriental kings. A great many palms grew on the way from Jerusalem to Jericho; from these they broke off blooming branches and strewed them in the way: some also carried green boughs and branches of blossoms in their hands, as was customary when they celebrated the tabernacle and dedication feasts, while they sang songs of gratulation and praise.

Accompanied by the Jews who had come over to see Lazarus, the Saviour left Bethany the same morning and came to Bethphage —a row of houses on either side of the public way surrounded by fig-trees, whence its name "place of figs." The multitude had probably come thus far to meet him. Seeing the favourable disposition of the people towards him, Jesus concluded to avail himself of it, in order to make an abiding impression upon the disciples, when they should afterwards reflect upon the manner of his entrance into Jerusalem. That he was really the Messiah foretold by the prophets, and the true nature of the Messianic character—were the facts which he desired to impress strongly upon their minds. Now the prophet Zechariah had described the arrival of the Messiah as that of a peaceful king who felt interested in the welfare of his people, and who would enter the metropolis of his kingdom riding upon an ass. The ass was an animal used for riding in time of peace, while the horse was employed in times of war. In order to lead his disciples to the consideration that the prophetic view of Zechariah, in regard to the condition of the expected deliverer, was fulfilled in him, our Lord made choice of this very mode of entrance. He sent two of his disciples forward to a place where he told them they would find a colt "on which no man had ever yet sat." This specification is not without meaning, as yearlings which have never borne the yoke, and never been employed for common purposes, were reserved for sacred uses. This colt they were to unloose and to bring to Jesus; they found the colt, and were proceeding to unloose it when the owners objected; but when the disciples said, "The Lord hath need of him," they, sharing in the general feeling, felt glad and honoured, and allowed them to take not only the colt, but the dam, which from natural instinct followed her young. They brought them to Jesus, and laid their clothes upon them both, not knowing which of them he would choose to ride. He mounted the colt, and rode onward, attended by the rejoicing crowd, who spread their garments in his path, and waved their branches with exulting shouts. The disciples fully shared in the enthusiasm of that hour; and when the triumphal multitude came near to Jerusalem at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the multitude broke forth in singing the verses from the 118th Psalm, which were usually sung at the feasts already mentioned, and which were always considered to bear a reference to Messiah.

> "Hosanna! Blessed is the king of Israel,
> That cometh in the name of the Lord!
> Blessed be the kingdom of our father David,
> That cometh in the name of the Lord!
> Hosanna in the highest!"



627.—Jerusalem.



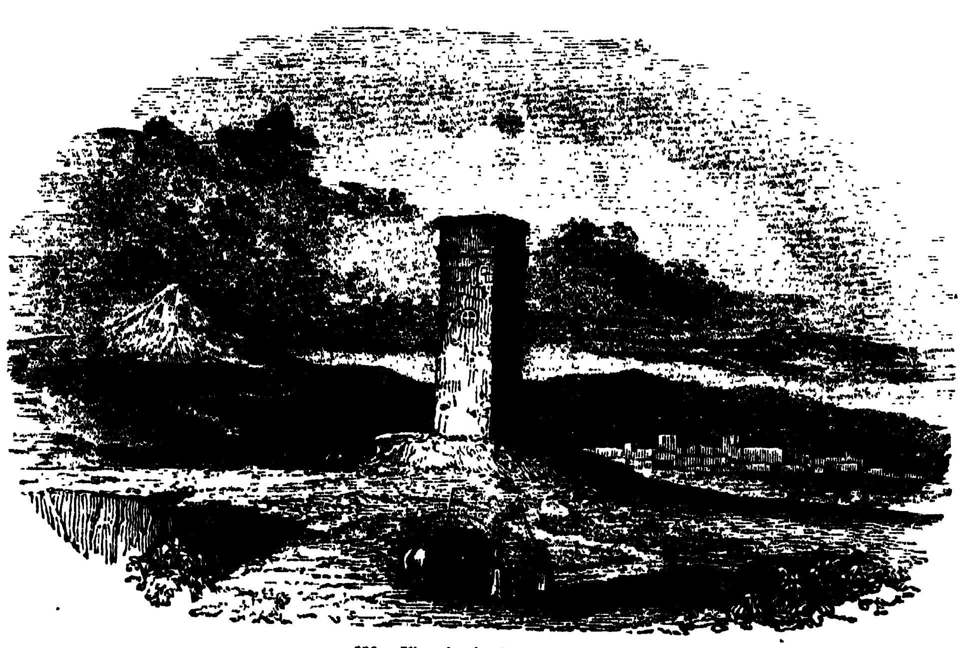
628.—Christ's Entry into Jerusalem.
Crist yn myned i Jerusalem.



629.—Sycamore Fig-tree.
Ffigyswydd Sycamoraidd.



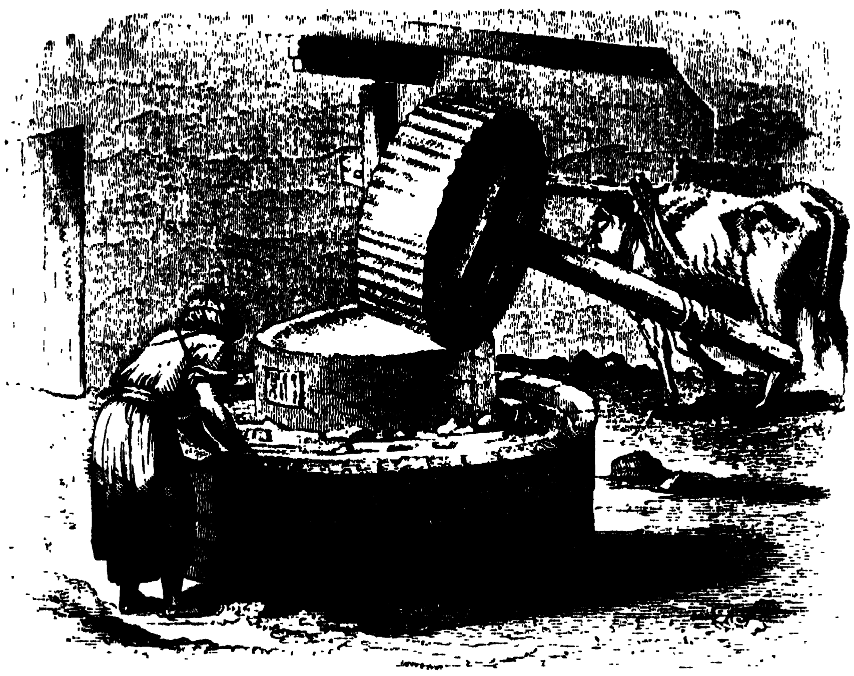
630.—Date-palm.
Y Grawn-Balmwydden.



632.—View in the Land of Moab.
Golygfa yn Nhir Moab.



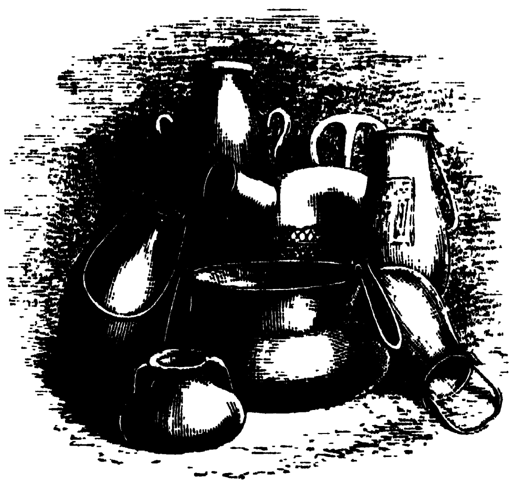
631.—Palm-tree.
Palmwydden.



633.—Fine Lime-grinding Mill at Cairo.
Melin Falu Calch bydferth yn Cairo.



634.—Modern Egyptian Plasterers at Work, showing some of the Tempering Operations used
Plastrwyr Aiphtaidd Diweddar wrth eu gwaith, yn dangos rhai o'r Gweithrediadau Tymheraidd a ddefnyddir.



635.—Egyptian Culinary Vessels.
Llestri Cegin yr Aipht.



637.—A Nazarite. (Salvator Rosa.)
Nazaread.



636.—Collecting of Dung.
Casglu Biswail.

SUNDAY XXVI.—THE PROPHET EZEKIEL.

THE prophet Ezekiel has numerous allusions to ancient arts and usages, some of which we purpose in this page to illustrate.

In chap. iv. 15, the prophet is instructed to take a symbolical cake, and, to give intensity to the signification, he is ordered to bake it with dried human dung. At this Ezekiel demurred, saying, "Ah, Lord God, behold my soul hath not been polluted: for from my youth up, even till now, have I not eaten of that which dieth of itself or is torn in pieces; neither came there abominable flesh into my mouth." On this he was allowed to substitute cow's dung, with which, being a usual article of fuel, he cheerfully baked his cake. This passage does not require much explanation, as the cow-dung which has dried on the road is still collected by our village poor and used for fuel, particularly in baking bread, for which it is well suited, by reason of the length of time which it retains the heat. But of the extent of its use for these purposes in the East, as well as of animal dung generally, no idea can be formed from these circumstances. In regions where fossil coal is unknown, where wood is scarce, and where the means of carriage exist only in forms which would not allow the transport of fuel from a distance without raising the cost to an impracticable amount, animal dung is the main dependence of the inhabitants. Every particle is carefully collected by the women and children during the summer, made up into large cakes, which are left to dry in the sun, and stowed away for use in the winter. The processes of this operation, the eager collection, the cakes laid out to dry in the sun (sometimes stuck up against the walls of the cottages for the purpose), and the small stacks of the collected fuel, which are often set most conspicuously upon the flat tops of the same cottages, obtrude themselves most unpleasantly upon the notice of travellers. It may be well to observe that this use of animal dung for fuel is at the present day even more common in the country where Ezekiel wrote, than it was or now is in his native Palestine.

In chap. v. 1, the prophet is instructed to shave *his head* and his beard with a barber's razor. This was a symbolical action, and does not imply that the Israelites habitually shaved their heads any more than their beards, which we know they did not. In Eastern countries the great heat renders it unpleasant to wear *both* the hair and a covering upon the head. The alternatives are, to wear the hair without any covering upon the head, or to shave the head and *constantly* wear a covering. The Jews seem in general (for there are exceptions) to have taken the former course, and the modern Orientals have taken the latter. European residents make a compromise of usages by cropping the hair close, so as to allow them to cover or remain uncovered according to circumstances. The modern Greeks, following the example of their ancestors, wear their hair long and thick; but combine therewith the modern Oriental usage of keeping the head constantly covered, and the effect of this singular combination of opposite usages is highly unpleasant and unwholesome. The Persians by the large locks which hang down below their ears seem to do the same; but they do not in reality, as these locks form all the hair they possess on their heads, which are regularly shaven, except as regards the small tuft which all Moslems wear on the top of their heads. In ancient Egypt the modern Oriental practice of shaving the head existed: but when a covering was required, caps were worn, and, by the upper classes, frequently wigs,—the usage being, in fact, not unlike that which existed in England, and throughout Europe, sixty years since. Apart from the turbans of the priests, the crown of the king, and the helmet of the warrior, there is no allusion in Scripture to coverings for the heads of men; while the references to hair, its length, its beauty, its thickness, and the anointing of it, are of constant occurrence. The phrase "not a hair of his head shall fall to the ground" (2 Sam. xiv. 11) could only exist among a people who wore their hair. The distinction of the Nazarites was not that they wore their hair, and others not, but that they never cut their hair, which others did. As the Jews did not habitually shave *either* the head or beard, there could be little use of razors among them. They had a word, however, for describing a sharp knife or razor for shaving the hair; and the allusion in Isaiah (vii. 20) to "a razor that is hired," may suggest that the suitable implements were so uncommon as to be hired from the persons who possessed them, upon those occasions of mourning when it was customary to shave the head.

In the twelfth and thirteenth chapters the prophet has some remarkable allusions to building, especially of walls. In xii. 7, he performs the symbolical act of "digging through the wall with his hand." In like manner in Job (xxiv. 16) burglars are described as "digging through walls," which they had marked for themselves in the daytime, and our Saviour twice uses the same expression (Matt. vi. 19, 20). These allusions imply that the walls in view were built with clay or mud. In reference to the last of these texts, it is remarked in the 'Pictorial Bible'—"Probably the earliest immovable habitations that men built for themselves were of mud. Pliny, indeed, thinks that the Oriental took the first idea of constructing a house for himself and family from the swallow; and, in imitation of his feathered instructor, made his first attempt with mud. Whether so or not, it is certain that the dwellings of the mass of the population—that is, of the humbler classes—throughout Asia are now, and always have been, of clay or mud. The dwellings which come within this class are of three principal sorts: 1. A framework of hurdles or wicker, daubed thickly with mud; 2. The walls composed of successive layers of trodden mud or clay, each being left to dry (which it does rapidly) before another layer is spread upon it; 3. Built with sun-dried bricks, that is, with cakes of trodden clay or mud, fashioned in a mould and dried in the sun. Straw is usually mixed with them in order to strengthen them; but the poor peasantry have usually no straw or very little in the new-dried bricks, or more properly mud-cakes, with which their humble dwellings are constructed. In ancient times structures of a far higher class were built with the same materials." The same writer remarks that the act of *digging through* walls must be understood to refer to buildings the thick walls of which were formed of mud; had they been of burnt brick, stone, or wood, the phrase would lose much of its fitness, and in that case also digging through would have been the least practicable of all modes of gaining access to a building, or of obtaining egress from a city. Walls of the kind described under 2. are quite similar to those employed in building cottages in Devonshire, and are there called "cob-walls."

A writer in the 'Quarterly Review' (No. 116) argues, with much ingenuity, that these cob-walls of South Britain are of Phœnician origin. That the Phœnicians themselves had such walls he regards as clear, among other proofs, from this passage of Ezekiel: "Of all the prophets best acquainted with the customs of the Phœnicians—of which the twenty-seventh chapter is a proof: when speaking of breaking through a wall, he invariably uses the word 'dig through;' this would be impossible in the case of a stone or brick wall, but by no means so as to one of cob." He also shows that if the Phœnicians had such walls, as was doubtless the case, they might be easily supposed to have introduced them into this country during their intercourse with its south-western shores.

In chap. xiii. 10, the prophet describes himself, in another symbolical action, as daubing a wall with "untempered mortar;" which was a peculiar condition, showing that the mortar was usually "tempered." It has been disputed whether the terms apply to the mortar by which the stones were cemented, or to that which was used in plastering the surface. The first may have been the case, but this wall could not then have been of moist cob, which requires no cement, but with dry cob, or brick, or stone. There is no doubt, however, that the ancient Jews did plaster the walls of their buildings, and there is every reason to conclude that their plasters were the same which are now in use. The most common sort is made of clay mixed with chopped straw, which is employed to give cohesion, as ox-hair is by our plasterers. This, to be good, requires to be well tempered, which is usually effected by long-continued treading or beating. This is much used to cover the exterior of walls of humbler materials; but it would only serve in dry countries, as the rain acts upon it very much, causing it to peel off; whence the prophet mentions an "overwhelming shower" as an agent in its destruction, as well as of the mud-built wall itself, which is liable to destruction by the same agencies: "Say unto them who daub it with untempered mortar, that it shall fall: there shall be an overwhelming shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend it!" With the clay lime is sometimes mixed, to produce a better kind of plaster. When lime is largely used, alone or mixed in a large proportion with certain earths, the tempering is usually performed by beating with staves, or by the turning of a wheel or roller, worked by an ox, horse, or mule, in much the same manner as that in which our brickmakers prepare their clay.

SUNDAY XXVI.—BIBLE HISTORY.

IN the noble speech in which he set forth the evils of the kingly government, Samuel draws a striking picture of the monarchical power as it then existed and was exercised: and it has been observed that this representation, which even in an antiquarian point of view is an invaluable document, exhibits a condition of regal power by no means dissimilar to that which still exists in the East. In the first place he describes the compulsory impressment of all likely young men, their sons, for the service of the king, in the army and the court, and to be his horsemen, to run before his chariots, and to work for him in trades and agricultural labour. Their daughters also should be taken in the same manner for the domestic service of the royal household; and the king would not in the end fail, on one ground or another, to take their heritages from them, to bestow them in reward upon his courtiers and officers. It reminded them also that the king would demand a tithe of their produce, as was the custom of the time, to support the expenses of the state. This was the strongest point to place before them: for they already by the law were required to pay this tenth to Jehovah as their king. This could not be relinquished; and as the temporal sovereign would still expect the regal tenth, they would in fact be burdened with a charge twice as heavy as that which any other nation was called to bear. The prophet concluded with—"And ye shall cry in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen, and the Lord will not hear you in that day."

The people were not, however, moved from their purpose by this representation; they answered, "Nay, but we will have a king to rule over us:" on which Samuel, with grief of heart, dismissed them for the present to their homes, with the understanding that a king would be provided for them.

The person on whom the nomination fell was Saul, the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin. This person, having gone far from home in the vain search after some strayed asses, found himself near Ramah, and concluded, by the advice of his attendant, to consult "the man of God" who dwelt in that place. He accordingly came before Samuel, furnished with a small present, according to a custom which is still kept up in the East. He no sooner appeared, than, according to a premonition from God, the prophet recognised in him the destined King of Israel. He gave him a hint to this effect, which Saul met by mentioning the smallness of his tribe and his want of family influence. Nothing more passed just then: but the prophet treated the stranger with marked distinction, induced him to stay with him over night, and in the morning early walked forth with him from the town. On the way, Samuel stopped, poured on Saul's head a vial of anointing oil, declaring that by this act the Lord anointed him "to be captain over his inheritance." He then kissed him; and to show that in this he acted by divine authority, he proceeded to tell him all the incidents which would occur in his journey home. Everything happened accordingly. He first met two men who told him that the lost asses were found, and that his father had become anxious at his prolonged absence. At another place, "in the plain of Tabor," he met three men, one carrying three kids, another bread, and a third a bottle of wine. They saluted him, and offered him some bread, which he took. After this he encountered a company of young men belonging to the school of the prophets, who were returning from the high place, uttering sacred chants to the sound of the psaltery, tabret, pipe, and harp. Here, as Samuel had foretold, a fit of holy enthusiasm came upon him, and he hastened to join them in their sacred exercises. It was, we are told, in this circumstance that the proverb originated, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" He then reached home, but kept secret, even from his own relatives, the communication which Samuel had made to him.

Some time after the prophet again called the people together in Mizpeh, to complete the important affair which they had left in his hands. He caused the tribes to cast lots, and the lot fell on Benjamin; the lot was then taken for the families of Benjamin, and fell on that of Kish; the lot was then cast for the members of that family, and the name of Saul was produced. Saul had attended at Mizpeh, but had withdrawn from the assembly as he saw the crisis approaching. He was, however, sought for, and when brought forward, the people perceived with satisfaction that "there was none like him among the people," as he was taller by the head and shoulders than any one in all that crowd. A distinction of this sort was highly acceptable among ancient nations; and when the Israelites noticed it in Saul they shouted heartily, "Long live the King!" This was, however, succeeded by a general feeling of disappointment that their great movement should have come to the seemingly inadequate result of placing the crown upon the head of an obscure Benjamite, who was not only without those powerful connections which might give dignity to his station, but who had not yet in any way distinguished himself among men. The nation, as such, did not venture formally to refuse a king appointed in the way they had desired, and under the sanction of the Divine King; but they took no measures to give effect to his appointment, by making his reign a reality: and Saul was suffered to return to his own home in Gibeah, attended only by a few who were satisfied with his appointment; while the disaffected—who appear to have formed the great majority—utterly neglected him, and "brought him no presents," or those half-voluntary offerings made to kings, which were essential to the support of the dignity to which he had been raised.

We are told that, before the assembly dispersed, Samuel "wrote the manner of the kingdom in a book." If that which Samuel wrote in a book had been preserved, it would now be regarded as one of the most interesting documents in the world: but perhaps it is well that it has not been preserved, as, in the undistinguishing imitation of the points of policy and law which are exhibited in the Old Testament, it is more than probable that modern Christian nations would have been solicitous to conform their institutions to that which appears to have been of divine origin, but which, although indeed of such origin, was intended only for special use under the peculiar circumstances of the Hebrew people. But although we cannot know what was actually written in Samuel's book, we may judge, from what subsequently transpires, that the document contained stipulations defining the position of the king, and the rights and duties of the people. The appearance of some such document or constitution, and that the people deemed it favourable to them, is implied in various passages of the history (2 Sam. v. 3; 2 Chron. xxiii. 11). It must also have provided that the king should only possess the executive power of the government, and regard himself as the vicegerent of the Lord, with whom the legislative power still remained. And even as regarded the executive power, the king was still, in all matters of consequence, to consult the Divine King through the appointed oracles, and was bound to act according to the directions thus received. As regarded the succession to the crown, it appears to have been intended that it should be confined to a particular family; but every successive king was to regard himself as receiving his appointment from the Lord, who reserved the right of appointing to the throne any one of the family more suited than the natural heir to reign, and indeed of removing one dynasty and establishing another at pleasure. All these regulations were framed with the view of keeping the crown still in subservience to the theocratical principles of the constitution; so that the great objects for which the Israelites were set apart among the nations might not be altogether lost, even though a human king was given to them.

Shortly after these transactions, Jabesh-Gilead, a city on the borders of Ammon, beyond the Jordan, was assaulted by the Ammonites, and the inhabitants were reduced to such extremities that they offered to capitulate, but could obtain no better terms than that every one of them should have his right eye put out, to disqualify him from using the bow in war. To these savage terms the Jabesh-Gileadites agreed to submit in case nothing occurred for their advantage within seven days. In this desperate extremity they thought of applying to the newly-appointed king, who had quietly returned to his former occupations, and was engaged in following the herds when the messengers arrived. The heart of Saul rose to the greatness of the occasion. Then and for ever he laid aside the small cares of pasture and tillage, and put on the warrior and the king. Fired with generous wrath at the indignity thus offered to Israel, he imperatively summoned, by swift messengers, the men of Israel skilled in arms to join their king. Three hundred and thirty thousand armed men almost immediately came to him in Bezek, and with this force he hastened across the river, and by a forced march appeared before Jabesh-Gilead, before the seven days had expired. The Ammonites were defeated with great slaughter, and the beleaguered city relieved.

Saul's conduct on this occasion, crowned as it was by such eminent success, did more for him in popular opinion than his prophetic nomination or even his imposing figure. The people



…—Saul and the Ammonites. (Adapted from Le Brun.)—1 Sam. xi.



640.—Plague of Thunder and Rain. (Rubens.)—1 Sam. xii.
Pla y Taranau a'r Gwlaw.



641.—Jonathan and his Armour-bearer. (Salvator Rosa.)—1 Sam. xiv.
Jonathan a'i Gludydd arfau.



642.—Runners attending a Chariot.
Rhedegwyr gyda Cherbydau.



643.—Saul returning from Battle with the Spoil of the Amalekites. (Adapted from Le Brun.)—1 Sam. xv.
Saul yn dychwel o'r Frwydr gyd âg Ysbail yr Amaleciaid. (Wedi ei gyfaddasu o Le Brun.)



644.—Samuel and Agag. (Ant. Coypel.)—1 Sam. xv.
Samuel ac Agag.



645.—Open Temple in Phœnicia.
Teml agored yn Phenicia.



646.—Druidical Stone in Persia.
Maen Derwyddol yn Persia.



647.—Grindstone.
Llif-ddun.

escorted him in triumph to Gilgal, where the victory was celebrated with many sacrifices, and the new king was confirmed by acclamation in his kingdom.

In this transaction Saul had, in the haste and emergency of the occasion, acted entirely on his own responsibility, and had acted successfully and well. On a stronger mind this might have had no ill effect, but to him it was ruin. It disposed him too much to take the same course—to act on his own responsibility—on other occasions, for which the same excuse of imperative emergency could not be produced. This is the key to the false position in which we afterwards find him placed. The doctrine of the responsibility of the human to the divine King was the fundamental principle of the constitution. Everything hinged on that; and, if not now, at the commencement of the regal government, rigidly enforced, it was certain to be ever after neglected. This explains the apparent rigour with which this point was afterwards enforced upon Saul, and shows the ground on which the kingly power was not continued in his house.

Samuel, who was present at Gilgal, and was now obviously called upon to resign his executive authority, took the opportunity of addressing the people. When we consider the greatness of the occasion—the last of an old order of government peaceably laying down his power to the first of a new line of rulers—and when we look to the vastness of the audience, composed of the flower of the nation which it represented, we are prepared to pay much attention to the speech of Samuel, as one that must be remarkable, and may be important. It was both: "Behold," he said, "I have hearkened unto your voice in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you. And now, behold, the king walketh before you; and I am old and grey-headed: and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day. Behold, here I am. Witness against me this day before the Lord and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or at whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith?" Considering the circumstances under which justice and government are and always have been administered in the East, this is an appeal which few judges or governors would venture to make. But here the people answered with one voice, "Thou hast not defrauded us nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken aught of any man's hand."

The prophet then proceeded to explain and vindicate the course of the divine conduct towards the nation from the commencement of their history till then; and by showing the sufficiency of the theocratic government, he again brought forward their criminality in demanding a king, "when the Lord their God was their king." Nevertheless, if they and the king over them continued to serve the Lord, his blessing should still rest upon them, and render them prosperous. The prophet then, to show that he spoke by divine authority in denouncing the course they had taken, called upon the Lord to send thunder and rain as a sign to them; and accordingly a thunder-storm, attended by heavy rains, came on, although the time of the year, it being then the wheat harvest, was one in which these phenomena are not naturally exhibited in the climate of Palestine. This made a strong and salutary impression upon the people, and contributed to maintain Samuel in that degree of regulating authority which was most important, if not essential, at the commencement of the new order of affairs.

Under the peaceful government of Samuel the Philistines had acquired so great an ascendency, that they had deprived the Israelites of the last remains of their freedom, by placing garrisons in their strongholds, and by completely disarming the population. They carried this so far, that all the smiths had been removed lest they should make swords or spears, and every man was obliged to go to the Philistines to get even his agricultural implements sharpened.

Thus it happened that although Saul retained in service three thousand of the men who had followed him to the war with the Ammonites, himself and his son Jonathan were the only persons who possessed a sword or a spear.

Of these three thousand men Saul stationed one thousand under Jonathan at Gibeah, and retained two thousand with himself at Michmash. The open war with the oppressors of Israel, which lasted throughout the reign of Saul, was commenced by Jonathan, who with his thousand men surprised the fortress of Geba, and put the garrison to the sword. Incensed at this defeat and loss, the Philistines brought together a large host, containing a strong body of war-chariots, to the great terror of the Israelites generally, who felt themselves unequal to a contest with the valiant and well-disciplined troops of the Philistines. Most of the men whom Saul had hastily called together on this emergency, and even of his selected band, deserted and either "hid themselves in caves, in thickets, and in rocks," or passed over into the country beyond the Jordan. In this emergency Saul sent for Samuel, who promised to be with him at the end of seven days at Gilgal, in order "to offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, and to show him what he should do." While he waited for Samuel, whose message precluded him from taking any decided course, the desertion continued, and at length, as the seventh day drew to a close without any token of the prophet's approach, Saul, in his desperation, had the hardihood himself to offer the sacrifices; thus assuming the priestly office, contrary to the sanction of the law, and perhaps in imitation of those neighbouring states in which the right of exercising sacerdotal functions was deemed inherent to the crown. He had scarcely ended when Samuel arrived, late indeed, but within the time he had appointed. The king advanced to meet him, but was received with stern grief by the prophet, who saw in this act the first-fruits of dispositions which would bring down ruin upon him and his house. This he scrupled not to tell him plainly, and departed, leaving him to his own resources. Saul then numbered his men, and finding that not more than six hundred remained with him, retreated to Gibeah, closely pursued by the Philistines, who blockaded the place. During the siege the inhabitants were greatly distressed, and affairs seemed daily to become more desperate, when a new and favourable aspect was given to them by the valour of Jonathan, who, impatient of the inactivity to which circumstances had condemned him, resolved to carry an alarm into the very camp of the Philistines, which was then stationed at the entrance of a pass leading into the valley of Michmash. Attended only by his armour-bearer, whom he encouraged by the assurance "that there was no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few," he made his way among the rocks till he came to an outpost of the invaders, where, falling upon them at unawares, he slew about twenty of their number, and thereby created such a panic in the main body, who imagined that the whole Hebrew host must be following close upon the footsteps of the prince, that they had instant recourse to a precipitate flight. The success of this daring exploit was no sooner perceived by Saul from the opposite heights of Gibeah, than he commenced the pursuit of the fugitives, and pronounced a hasty curse upon any one who should stop before nightfall to satisfy his hunger. The only transgressor of this injunction was Jonathan himself, who, being quite ignorant of its existence, refreshed himself with a little wild honey as he passed through the woods. When this came to the knowledge of Saul, he felt himself bound to put even his heroic son to death; but the people interposed, and would not allow their deliverer to be sacrificed to the obligations of a foolish oath. They said, "Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day." Another consequence resulted from this vow, which gives a curious and unexpected illustration of the reasons which induced the Hebrew lawgiver to prohibit the use of blood, and even to subject to certain restrictions the slaughter of animals for domestic use. Rendered ravenous with hunger by the abstinence which Saul had imposed, the sun had no sooner set than the soldiers "flew upon the spoil, and took sheep and oxen and calves, and slew them on the ground: and the people did eat them with the blood." That is to say, that in their circumstances, they gave way to a propensity which exists and is known to have existed in various Asiatic, African, and even European nations, to eat flesh raw, newly killed, and to luxuriate in the warm blood,—a taste which, from the facts and from the prohibition, would seem to have been natural to man, as to most carnivorous animals, till he has learned to prefer artificial to natural warmth in his animal food, and to find in dressed meat juices more savoury than blood. When the fact was made known to Saul, he hurriedly interposed to arrest the crime, and to provide that the animals should be so slaughtered as to drain their blood.

The victory of Saul over the Philistines appears to have established his reputation among the surrounding nations; and from this period the most warlike of them quailed before him, and were defeated in a succession of easy victories.

The accumulated offences of the Amalekites against the Hebrews, from the time of the departure from Egypt until then, came to mind: and Saul was specially charged by the Lord through Samuel "to execute his fierce wrath upon Amalek," by extirpating a people whose ancient crimes were magnified by their increasing corruptions. The Amalekites had in fact been devoted to destruction by a vow of the ancient Israelites, which their successors had not till now been in a condition to execute. Arms thus authorized could not but be successful.



SUNDAY XXVI.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

AS he came near to Jerusalem, Jesus, in a solemn pause, steadfastly regarded its lofty towers and bulwarks, till he was moved even to tears by the clear foresight of the terrible doom which awaited that proud city, and which was destined to fall upon it before that generation passed away. He spoke in words which form both a picture and a prophecy—"The days shall come upon thee that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave thee one stone upon another, because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation." This clear description of a siege as conducted by the Romans pointed out the terrible enemy which Jerusalem would have to withstand, and with great and minute accuracy indicates all the circumstances which actually took place in the great and fatal siege which left the holy city desolate before that generation had passed away.

All the city was moved by various emotions at this public entry of the Redeemer. Doubtless general attention was directed to his motions, and to observe the step which would next be taken by him. He entered at the gate near the temple, and straightway proceeded to the sacred courts. The blind and lame of the city no sooner heard of his arrival than they hastened to him there, and he healed them. This was no other than his usual course. It was wonderful, beneficent, great; but it was not for him extraordinary, and the ill-founded expectations which had been raised were sorely disappointed. The children in the temple still kept up the cry which had before been raised; and the priests and scribes in high displeasure called his attention to it: "Hearest thou what these say?" To which he answered, "Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?"

After some further discourse, which, with the previous proceedings, occupied the rest of the day, Jesus left the city and returned to Bethany, where he lodged.

The next morning, being Monday, Jesus and his disciples again left Bethany to spend the day in Jerusalem. On the way Jesus observed a fig-tree in full leaf, and, being hungry, went to it, expecting to find fruit thereon. As the fruit of the fig-tree is perfected before the leaf, it was natural to expect fruit upon a tree which made this show of leaves; as the time of fig-gathering was not yet come, it was certain that the fruit which this tree ought to bear had not yet been gathered. But Jesus found the tree without fruit, and said, in the hearing of his disciples, "Let no man eat fruit of thee henceforth for ever." He then proceeded to the city, on entering which, he went to the temple, and expelled from the sacred court the dealers and money-changers, by whose merchandise and tables it was thronged in the week before the Passover. This act was similar to that with which, three years before, he had commenced his ministry in Jerusalem. He then remained teaching in the temple, and the attention with which the people heard him prevented his enemies from venturing then to lay hands upon him.

In the evening our Lord again repaired to Bethany.

On returning to Jerusalem on the next, being Tuesday, morning, the fig-tree on which he had the preceding day laid the weight of his curse, and which was then so rich in foliage, was found to be dried away even to the roots. This proceeding of our Lord must probably be regarded in the light of a symbolical action, teaching that his power to punish the guilty was as strong as that which he had more usually exercised in conferring benefits. But with the usual beneficence of his character and actions, he demonstrated this truth in the way least of all others calculated to inflict injury or pain. It was exercised upon a fig-tree, barren, and therefore unprofitable to any one, but having the show, though it lacked the reality, of useful life; it was, moreover, a tree standing by the public way, and therefore belonging to no one who could complain that his property had been destroyed.

On proceeding to teach in the temple, the priests and others in authority gathered around him, requiring to know by what authority he taught in that place; for it was the province of the Sanhedrim to grant the right of teaching in the temple, and this Christ had never received. They perhaps hoped that he would answer that he acted under divine authority as the Messiah, and that they might thus obtain matter of accusation against him. At another time he would perhaps so have answered; but now, being aware of the snare laid for him, he refrained from a direct answer, but, as on some other occasions, solved the question by another—"The baptism of John, was it from heaven or of men?" This they could not answer, being aware that, if they replied "of God," he would have asked why then they had not believed in him; while they dreaded to say "of men," lest the people, who generally regarded John as a great prophet, should be offended. In the course of the day our Lord delivered the well-known and striking parables of the Two Sons, of the Wicked Husbandman, and of the Wedding Garment.

Having failed in the former experiment, the Pharisees now tried our Saviour with a far more subtle and dangerous question. This was, whether it were lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar or not. If he answered that it was not lawful, they had ground on which to denounce him to the Romans; whereas if he alleged that it was lawful, he would not fail to incur popular odium, as it was a growing and very general opinion that it was not only degrading, but absolutely unlawful, for the free-born sons of Abraham to pay tribute to strangers and idolaters; and it was the subsequent growth of this opinion that led to the revolt of the Jews and the ruin of the nation. Conscious of the snare laid for him, Jesus asked to see the tribute money, or a specimen of the coin which was equal to the amount of the annual tribute or capitation tax, and in which that tax was usually paid. He asked whose image and inscription the coin bore, and was told "Cæsar's;" on which he answered, "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." This answer seems to leave the question undecided, because he, who was not come to be a judge or a divider, would not be forced to give an answer either way to serve their purposes against himself. The questioners admired an answer so skilfully framed that they could not take hold of it to his disadvantage; and perceiving that it was useless to attempt "to entangle him in his talk," they gave over the design and left the place.

The Sadducees, a sect which disbelieved in a future life, and whose opinions were very prevalent among the upper classes in Judea, then put a question to him, proposing the case of a woman who, under the leviate law, married seven brothers in succession, and asking whose wife she would be in the life to come. This question Jesus answered without reserve, declaring that the relation of husband and wife did not exist in heaven; and perceiving the covert blow at the notion of a future life which the question involved, he added further a proof of it from that part of Scripture (the Pentateuch) which alone they received as the revealed will of God. This he did by reminding them that when God called to Moses from the burning bush, he said, "I *am* the God of Abraham," &c., which was a proof that then Abraham really lived, seeing that he *is* not the God of the dead, but of the living.

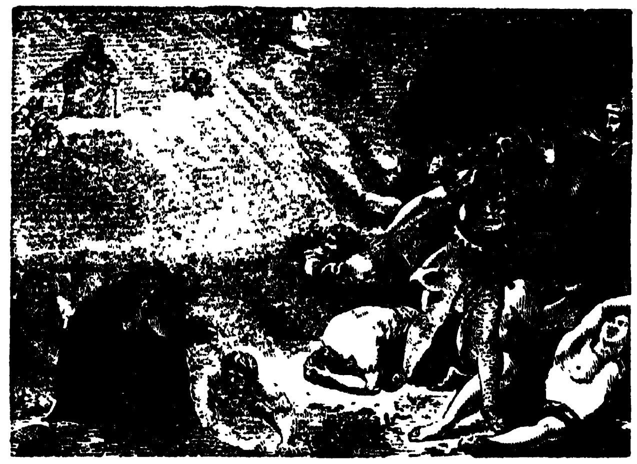
Soon after Jesus broke forth into that terrible denunciation of the Pharisees and their doctrines which occupies the 23rd chapter of Matthew's Gospel; and which he concluded by declaring that the existing generation should not have passed away till all the blood they had shed, and all the iniquities they had committed, had been terribly avenged. Then, foreseeing the miseries which awaited the devoted city, he added mournfully, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings—and ye would not!"

It seems to have been just after this that Jesus, who sat over against the place where the chests were placed to receive the voluntary offerings of the people to the treasury of the temple, perceived a poor woman drop therein "two mites, which make a farthing." What is here called a farthing is the quadrans, worth about a farthing and a half, which was the smallest offering that would be received into the treasury, and the half of which was represented by a separate copper coin, the smallest then in use. Large sums were at the same time dropped by rich men into the sacred coffers. But our Lord directed the attention of his disciples to the woman's offering, and declared that its moral value far exceeded those of the wealthy offerers, for they offered the easy excess of their abundance, whereas she offered all that she had, even all her living.

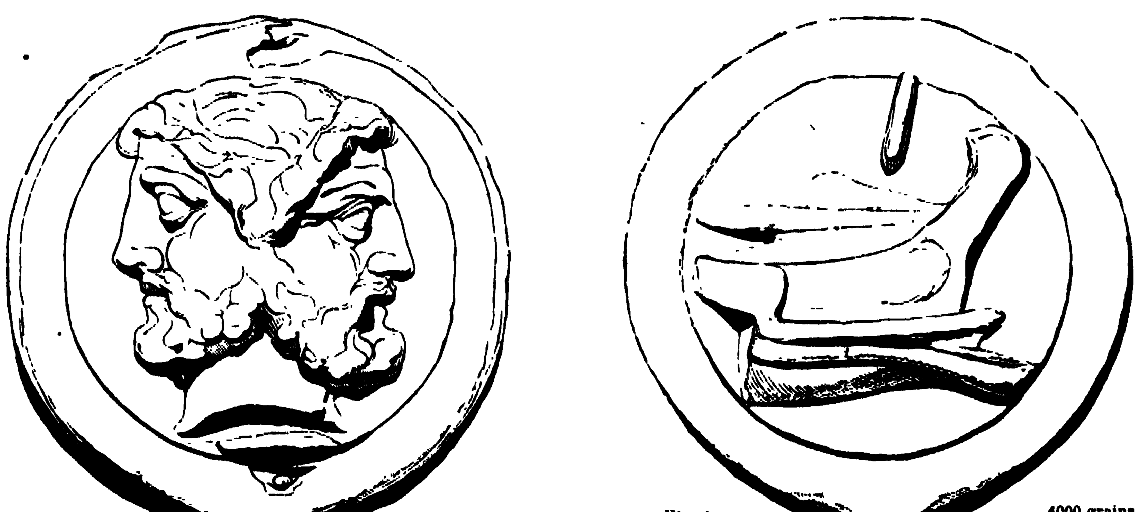
On leaving the temple for the day, one of the disciples called his Lord's attention to the size of the stones, and the magnificence of the buildings; to which Jesus answered, "Seest thou these great buildings? The days will come in which there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." And this, forty years after, was literally accomplished, the temple having been destroyed, sorely against the will of the conqueror himself, and the walls being eventually and designedly razed to the very ground.



649.—Christ and the Tribute Money.
Crist ac Arian y Deyrnged.



648.—The Son of Man coming in the Clouds.—Mat. xxiv.
Mab y Dyn yn dyfod yn y Cymmylau.



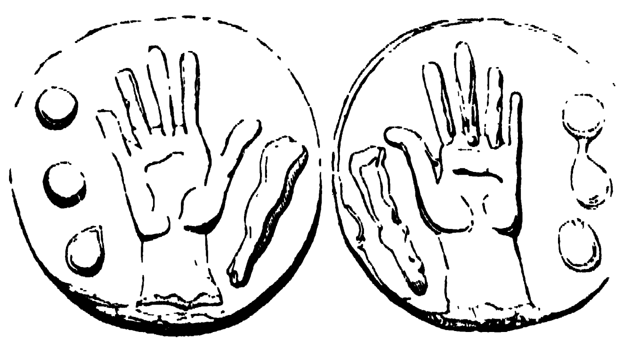
650.—Roman As.
As Rhufeinig.

Weight.
Pwysau.

4000 grains.
4000 o ronynau.



652.—Christ and the Tribute. (Rubens.)
Crist a'r Deyrnged.



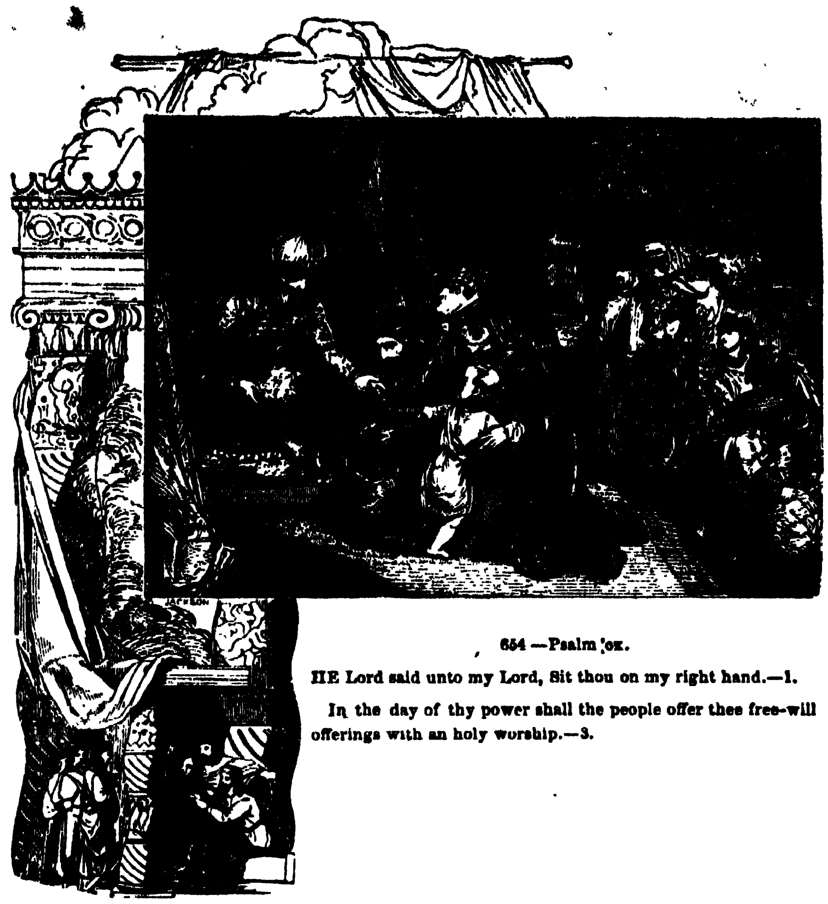
651.—Roman Quadrans.
Pedwaran Rufeinig.



653.—Figs.
Ffigys.



662.—Psalm cxviii.



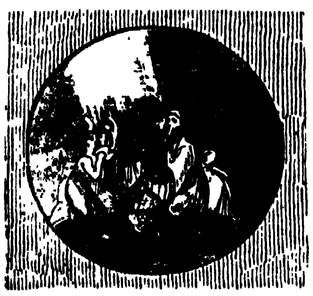
654.—Psalm cx.

HE Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand.—1.

In the day of thy power shall the people offer thee free-will offerings with an holy worship.—3.



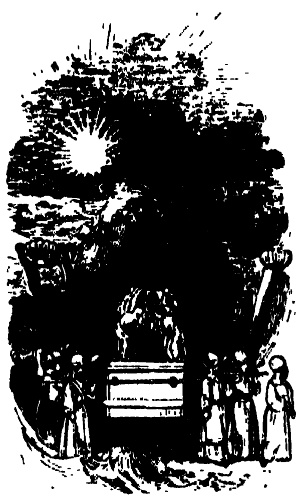
657.—Psalm cxiii.



661.—Psalm cxvii.



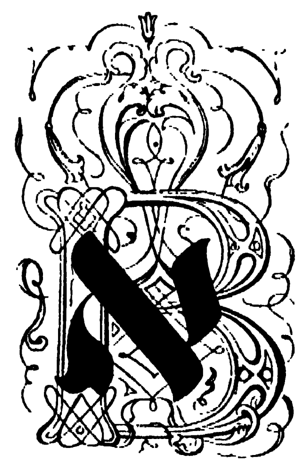
655.—Psalm cxi.



658.—Psalm cxiv.



664.—Psalm cxix. Beth.



663.—Psalm cxix. Aleph.



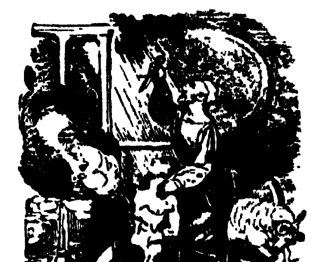
659.—Psalm cxv.



660.—Psalm cxvi.

AM well pleased that the Lord hath heard the voice of my prayer.—1.

I will pay my vows unto the Lord in the sight of all his people: in the courts of the Lord's house, even in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise the Lord.—16.



656.—Psalm cxii.



666.—Psalm cxix. Daleth.



665.—Psalm cxix. Gimel.

SUNDAY XXVII.—THE PSALMS

ALPHABETICAL PSALMS.

ONE of the peculiarities of the Psalms can be less preserved in a translation than that alphabetical arrangement which we find in some of them. Under this arrangement certain Psalms are divided into twenty-two lines, or sets of lines, or periods, or stanzas, each of which begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet, which has the same number of letters. Thus the first word of the first members of the poem begins with א (A), the second with ב (B), and so on to ת (T), which is the last letter. There are still extant in the Old Testament twelve of these poems (Psalms xxv., xxxiv., xxxvii., cxi., cxii., cxix., cxlv.; Prov. xxxi. 10—31; Lament. i., ii., iii., iv.). Three of these (Psalms cxi., cxii.; Lam. iii.) are perfectly alphabetical, in which every line is marked by its initial letter; the other nine are less perfectly alphabetical, in which every stanza only is so distinguished. Of the three former it is to be remarked, that not only is every line distinguished by its initial letter, but that the whole poem is laid out into stanzas: two of them (Psalms cxi. and cxii.) into ten stanzas each, and these stanzas are of two lines each, except the last, which has three lines. In these the sense and the construction manifestly point out the division into stanzas, and mark the limit of each stanza. The third (Lam. iii.) of these perfectly alphabetical poems consists of twenty-two stanzas of three lines; but in this the initial letter of every stanza is also the initial letter of every line in that stanza. In all these three poems the pauses of the sentences coincide with the pauses of the lines and stanzas. It may also be observed of these three poems, that the lines so determined by the initial letter in the same poem, are remarkably equal to one another in length, in the number of words nearly, and probably in the number of syllables; and that the lines of the same stanza have a remarkable congruity with one another in the matter and form, as well as in the sense and construction. After this it scarcely needs to be added that the alphabetical poems have been of great service in determining the nature of the Hebrew metre, and the division of lines and stanzas.

Of the other nine poems less perfectly alphabetical, in which the stanzas only are marked with initial letters, six consist of stanzas of two lines, two of stanzas of three lines, and one of stanzas of four lines; not taking irregularities into the account at present. And these stanzas likewise naturally divide themselves into their distinct lines, the sense and the construction plainly pointing out their limits; and the lines have the same congruity one with another in matter and form, as was above observed in regard to the poems more perfectly alphabetical.

Another thing to be observed of the three poems perfectly alphabetical is, that in two of them the lines are shorter than those of the third by about one-third part or almost half; and of the other nine poems, the stanzas only of which are alphabetical, that three consist of the longer lines, and the six others of the shorter.

Bishop Lowth remarks, "The acrostic or alphabetical poetry of the Hebrews was certainly designed to assist the memory, and was confined altogether to those compositions which consisted of detached maxims or sentiments without any express order or connection. The same custom is said to have been prevalent—indeed, is said still to prevail in some degree—among the Syrians, the Persians, and the Arabs." And this is the general opinion. Michaelis suggests that it was employed in the first instance in funeral dirges as an aid to the mourners, and was afterwards employed on other occasions. The same author affirms that none of the poetical portions of Scripture to which this arrangement is applied, are in any way remarkable, excepting the Lamentations, and Psalm xxxvii.: "a certain indication that, however useful this kind of discrimination might be in assisting the memory of children and the vulgar, yet such minute arts are in general inconsistent with true genius." De Wette, in his useful though somewhat unsafe commentary on the Psalms, takes the same view, or rather amplifies it. "I consider the alphabetical arrangement as a contrivance of the rhythmical art, an offspring of the later vitiated taste. When the spirit of poetry has fled, men cling to the lifeless body, the rhythmical form, and seek to supply the absence of the one by the other. Indeed, nearly all the alphabetical compositions are remarkable for the want of connection (which I regard as the consequence rather than the cause of the alphabetical construction), for common thoughts, coldness and languor of feeling, and a low and occasionally mechanical phraseology. The thirty-seventh Psalm, which is the most free in its alphabetical arrangement, is perhaps alone to be excepted from this statement, and is in truth one of the best didactic poems of the Hebrews." He admits also the merits of the Lamentations; but thinks that they exhibit traces of an unpoetical period and degenerated taste.

The pieces arranged on the alphabetical principle exhibit many irregularities for which it is not easy to account. It is usual to lay all such things to the door of transcribers; but this is a matter in which they would be far less than in any other liable to mistake, since they would be confined by the peculiar arrangement itself.

A particular account of these irregularities would be of little interest to the English reader. They consist chiefly in the omission of certain letters, in the duplication of some, and the transposition of others.

In the 119th Psalm, where the alphabetical arrangement is the most conspicuously displayed, many remarkable points have been noted. It is more than twice the length of the longest Psalm in the whole book; and this length is divided into twenty-two parts of eight verses each, called after and beginning with the successive letters of the Hebrew alphabet. It is for this reason that the Jews call this Psalm the "great alphabet." It is further remarkable that in this long Psalm there are not more than two or three verses which do not contain some word relating to the law of God. There are ten words which are used for this purpose promiscuously in this composition, the "law," the "ways," the "testimonies," the "commandments," the "precepts," the "word," the "judgments," the "righteousness," the "statutes," and the "truth," of God. The Psalm contains a great many pious reflections and excellent rules, tending principally to set forth the excellence of the divine laws. Luther and others have endeavoured to make out that each of the twenty-two sections has a different leading idea or subject; but in fact it is difficult to discern the cohesion of the several verses in each section, or of the sections with each other; and notwithstanding all that has been said to the contrary, we strongly incline to think that it was in consequence of this want of obvious connection that the alphabetical arrangement was adopted for the purpose of helping the memory of those who might learn the Psalm in the original language. Any one who attempts to commit a large number of unconnected sentences to memory, will be at no loss to perceive the assistance which may be derived from a contrivance of this description.

Indeed, this use of the contrivance is so obvious, that our own language is not wanting in examples of it. We have before us an old book (1711), in which the entire Bible is compendiously indexed on this principle. The author in his preface asks, "Shall I need to apologize either for the novelty or plainness of this alphabetical method? I think not. However, as to the former, it is not so new as some may imagine, but as old as Jeremiah's Lamentations, yea, as David's Psalms, whereof some are penned in the order of the alphabet, and doubtless for the help of the memory in learning those divine poems without book."

The following specimen will show the nature of this curious work, and will convey no bad notion of the alphabetical arrangement which we have endeavoured to explain. The specimen is from the commencement of the third alphabet in the Psalms, and it will be observed that every line is intended as a summary of the Psalm which the number indicates:—

"Psalm 101. A plan of household government.
102. Afflicted person's prayer.
103. A song of praise for joyful days.
104. God's providences rare.

105. Both Egypt plagu'd and Israel sav'd.
106. They murmur and complain.
107. He represents God's providence.
108. And that man's help is vain.

109. Cursed is Judas in a type.
110. Christ priest and king declar'd.
111. God's works are pure, commandments sure.
112. The righteous man's reward.

113. Due praise to God must Gentiles give.
114. The hills like lambs did play.
115. The idols weak nor see nor speak.
116. To God we vows must pay."

SUNDAY XXVII.—BIBLE HISTORY.

NOW the Amalekites were invaded in their own land, and all but those who escaped the hot pursuit were destroyed. Saul, however, acting upon the impulses of pride and avarice, or moved by a sentiment of compassion which his mission did not sanction, spared the life of Agag, the king, and allowed the troops to reserve the more valuable parts of the spoil. This renewed instance of disobedience and presumption, in a matter which had become a point of blood-honour to the nation, sealed the fate of Saul. Truly does Solomon say that "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." So it was with the first Hebrew king, who was never so well satisfied with himself, never more exalted in spirit, than at this moment, when all this glory was passing from him. In this elation of heart he set up a monument of his victory in the land of Carmel (not Mount Carmel), through which he passed on his way to Gilgal.

At Gilgal Samuel came to him. The king went forth to meet the prophet, and informed him that he had faithfully fulfilled the Divine behests. But Samuel was not deceived. The disobedience of the king had already been made known to him; already the doom Saul had brought down on his own head had been imparted to him; and so much was he attached to the wrong-headed prince, that he much grieved at the tidings, and "cried unto the Lord all night." When, therefore, Saul claimed the merit of high obedience to himself, the prophet answered with indignation, "What meaneth, then, this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Saul answered, that the cattle had been spared for the purpose of sacrifice to the Lord. On this Samuel more distinctly pointed out his disobedience; but he still persisted that he had fulfilled his commission, and made a merit of having spared the cattle for sacrifice. To which Samuel replied, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of lambs." He added, that idolatry itself was not a greater sin before God than disobedience; and concluded with the terrible words, "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he also has rejected thee from being king." Having fulfilled this painful duty, Samuel turned to depart, but Saul laid hold of the skirt of his mantle to detain him, and it was rent in his hand; and the prophet seized this as a symbol of the great fact he had already in other words declared—"The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel this day, and given it to a neighbour of thine who is better than thee." Solicitous to preserve appearances before the heads of the nation, Saul still, however, pressed him to remain while worship was offered to God, and Samuel at length consented. Before his departure, he ordered Agag, the king of the Amalekites, to be put to death; and the captive monarch, who deemed himself safe under the protection of Saul, learned that there was in Israel a power above that in which he trusted.

From this time Samuel withdrew himself entirely from Saul, and never again visited him during his subsequent reign.

Soon after this Samuel received the divine instructions to proceed to Bethlehem, and anoint as king, or rather, for the succession to the crown, one of the sons of Jesse, a descendant of Boaz and Ruth, inhabiting that city. Understanding that Jesse had several sons, the prophet directed them to be brought before him. But the divine intimation, which the prophet expected, did not point out any of them; and learning that the youngest son, David by name, was out with the sheep, he directed him to be sent for. He soon entered, in all the freshness of youth and beaming with intelligence; and immediately the divine word came to the soul of the prophet, "Arise, anoint him; for this is he!" He accordingly arose, and poured upon his head the anointing oil; and then he returned to his own house in Ramah, and David to his sheep.

At this time the symptoms of the malady which darkened the days of Saul, and which threw him by turns into fits of melancholy madness and of frantic passion, became distinct and manifest. His courtiers, perceiving that this visitation was of that kind over which music had power, urged him to retain about his person a skilful player on the harp, whose strains might calm his mind and disperse the clouds which gathered around it. It happened that David was renowned for his minstrel skill, and was named as one eminently suitable for this office. The person who mentioned his name to the king, described him as "a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the Lord is with him." Saul therefore sent a somewhat arbitrary message to Jesse, "Send me David thy son, who is with the sheep." He accordingly came, and made himself very useful to the king, who held him in high esteem. We are told that "Whenever the evil spirit was upon Saul, David took an harp and played before him, so Saul's spirit was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him." How long he remained at court is not very clear; but we afterwards find him again at home, and again feeding his father's sheep.

The Philistines had by this time recovered from their last defeat, and now reappeared in the field with a most powerful army, which they marched into the land of Israel, and encamped at Azekah, whither Saul hastened to confront them. The Philistines then put forward a gigantic warrior named Goliath, who in highly insulting language challenged the Hebrew host to send forth one of their number to engage with him in single combat, the result of which should decide the fate of the war. This huge warrior, who was about ten feet high, and of proportionate bulk, was accoutred in complete armour, the first we read of in Scripture; and the enumeration of the articles of which it was composed is, even in an antiquarian point of view, highly interesting. "He had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of his coat was five thousand shekels (twelve hundred and fifty ounces) of brass, and he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass upon his shoulders. And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels (three hundred ounces) of iron, and one bearing a shield went before him." This suggests a lively idea of the ancient panoply of war, and in the details great similarity appears to the array of the Memlook guards of Egypt of a former day. Indeed the picture given by Forbin (see Fig. 669, p. 212) of one of these guards and his attendant, might almost stand for a picture of Goliath and his armour-bearer, and a far more interesting one than any of the numerous pictures from fancy which have ever been given. The weapons are the same also, with the addition of the club and battle-axe; for the sequel shows that besides the spear mentioned in the above account, the giant had a sword, which afterwards became famous in the history of David.

The effect which the view and challenge of this enormous warrior produced upon the Israelites was fully as great as the Philistines could have expected. They were peculiarly liable to be impressed by considerations of bulk and stature; and Saul himself was head and shoulders taller than any of his people. The man and his challenge struck the Hebrew host with dismay. The custom of nations prevented them from declining this mode of settling the war when proposed by the enemy, but who among them was able to compete with this huge Philistine? Day after day the proud unbeliever strode forth from the Philistine camp, and defied the armies of Israel; and among all the heroes of Saul, not one was found to take up the awful responsibility which the combat imposed.

At this juncture David arrived in the camp, sent by his father to inquire after, and convey provisions to, his three elder brothers, who were with the army. He heard the challenge of Goliath, and seeing that it provoked no response, he was fired with indignation, and offered to go out himself against the haughty infidel. This being reported to the king, he sent for him; and finding him a mere youth, whom he did not recognise in his present garb, he feared to risk the fate of Israel upon his arm, and endeavoured to dissuade him from the undertaking. But David assured the king that, in his reliance upon the divine protection and succour, he felt fully confident of success, and was assured that the same power which had at different times strengthened him to slay a lion and a bear in defence of his flocks, would also deliver him out of the hand of the Philistine. Saul then consented, and proceeded to arm the youthful champion with his armour, and to gird him with his own sword. But finding himself encumbered with accoutrements to which he was unused, David again took them off, and proceeded to action provided only with a sling and with five smooth stones, which he selected from the brook and put into his shepherd's



667.—Samuel Anointing David. (Raffaelle.)—1 Sam. xvi.
Samuel yn Eneinio Dafydd.



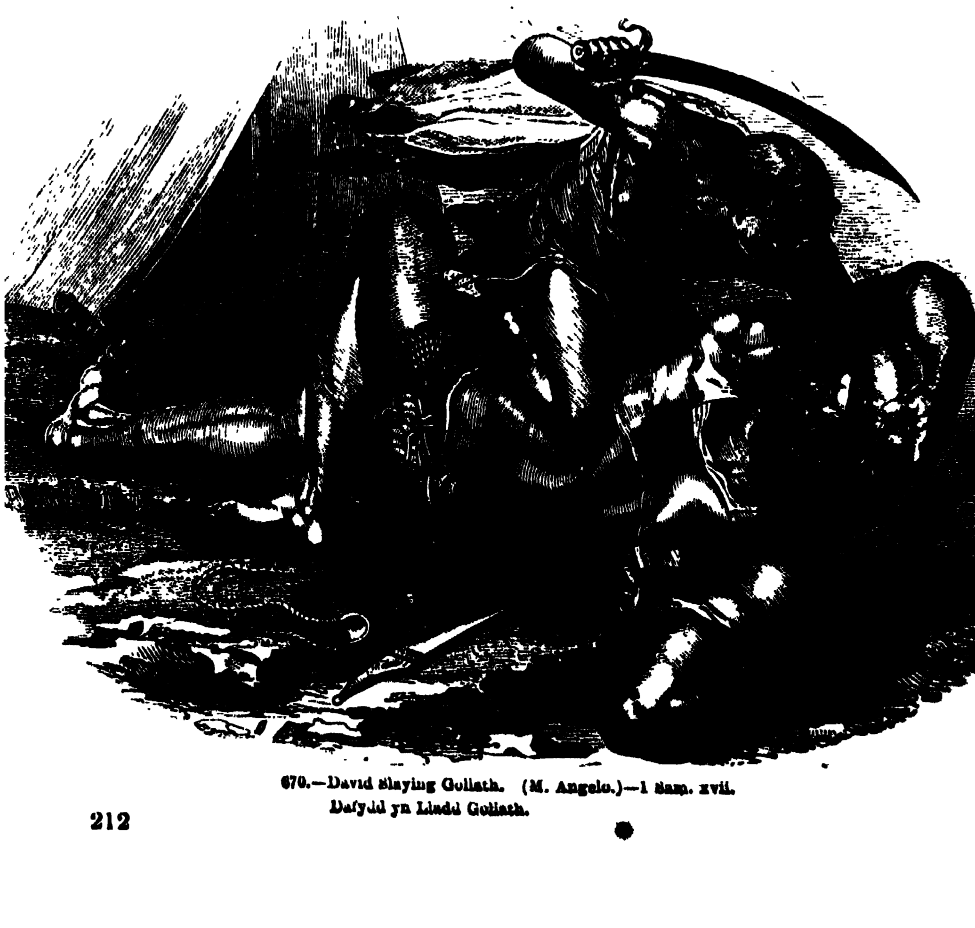
671.—Escape from a Window.
Diango trwy Ffenestr.



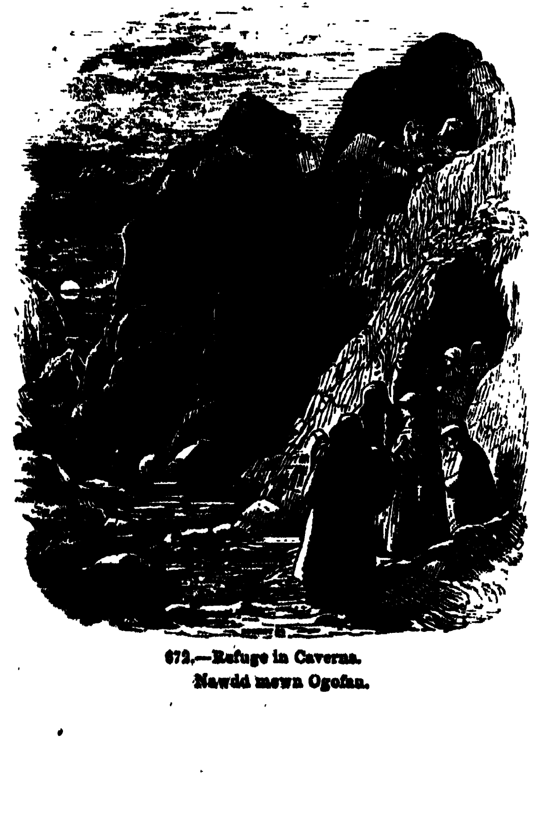
668.—Playing on the Harp before a King.
Chwareu'r Delyn o flaen Brenin.



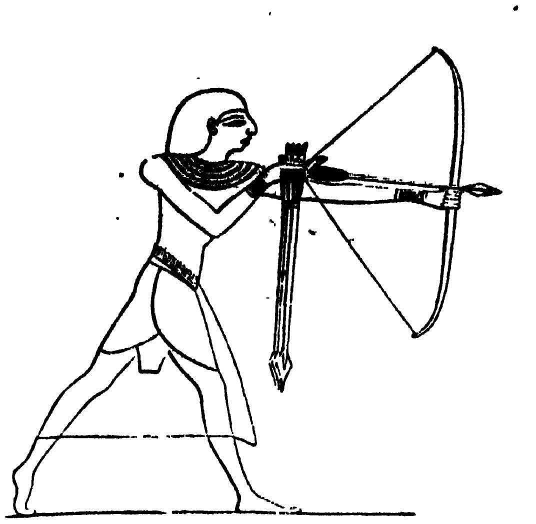
669.—Warrior and Armour-Bearer.—Modern Egypt.
Rhyfelwr a Chludydd Arfau.—Yr Aipht Ddiweddar.



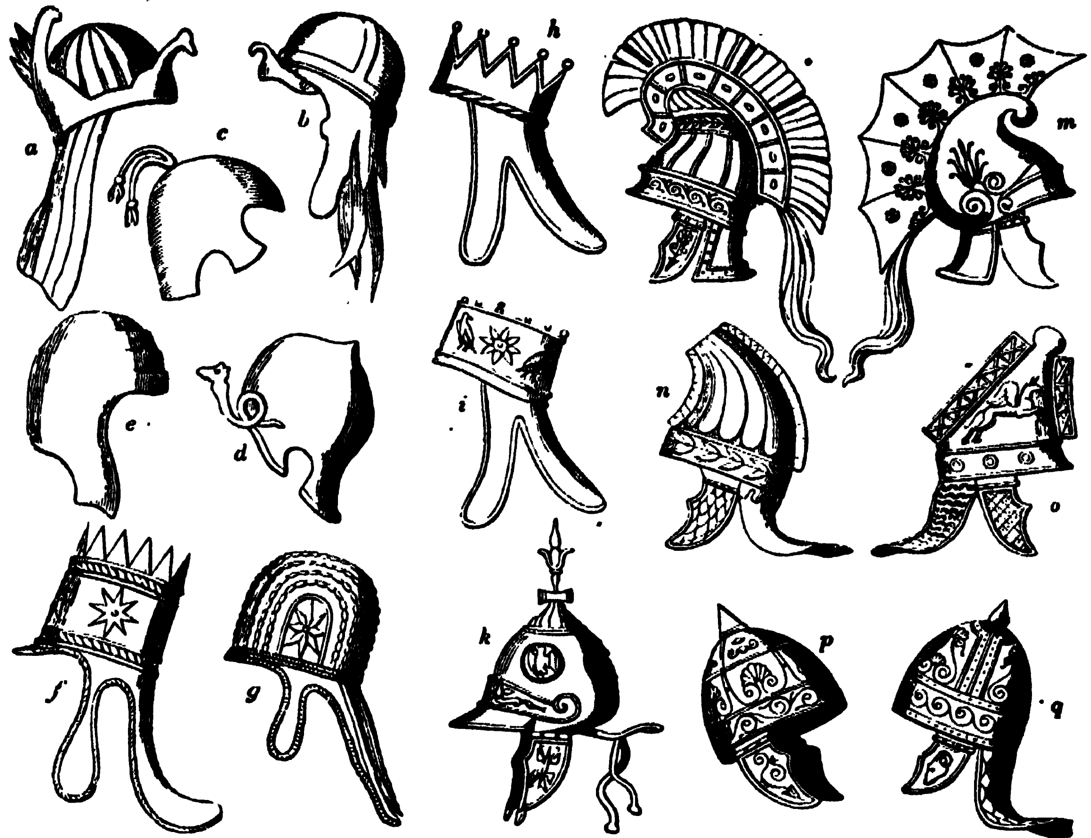
670.—David Slaying Goliath. (M. Angelo.)—1 Sam. xvii.
Dafydd yn Lladd Goliath.



672.—Refuge in Caverns.
Nawdd mewn Ogofau.



673.—Archer.
Bwäwr.

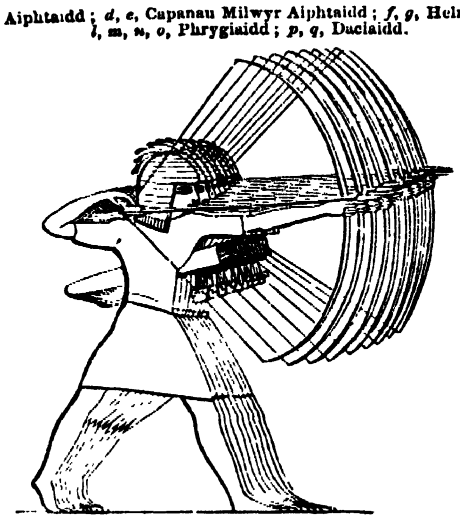


677.—Helmets. *a, b, c,* Egyptian Warriors; *d, e,* Caps of Egyptian Soldiers; *f, g,* Persian Helmets; *h, i, k,* Syrian; *l, m, n, o,* Phrygian; *p, q,* Dacian.

Helmau. *a, b, c,* Rhyfelwyr Aiphtaidd; *d, e,* Capanau Milwyr Aiphtaidd; *f, g,* Helmau Persaidd; *h, i, k,* Syriaidd; *l, m, n, o,* Phrygiaidd; *p, q,* Daciaidd.



675.—Throwing a Javelin.
Bwrw Saeth.



674.—Body of Archers.
Corph o Fwawyr.



676.—Grecian Warrior in Armour.
Milwr Groegaidd mewn Arfogaeth.



678.—Cuirasses.
a, Egyptian; *b,* Phrygian; *c,* Dacian; *d,* Roman, Common Soldier; *e,* Ditto, Officer; *f,* Ditto, Imperial.

Llurigau.
a, Aiphtaidd; *b,* Phrygiaidd; *c,* Daciaidd; *d,* Rhufeinaidd; *e,* Etto, Swyddog; *f,* Etto, Ymherodrol.

bag. When the giant beheld the unarmed youth advance against him, he felt insulted by such fragile opposition, and, addressing David with great disdain, "cursed him by his gods." The son of Jesse retorted with great animation, expressing his full confidence that the God of Israel would show that he could save "without sword or spear," by giving him the victory that day. Then, while the giant came on with ponderous tread, the young hero nimbly fitted a stone in his sling, and cast it with so true an aim, and with an arm so powerful, that it smote Goliath in the forehead, and, crushing through flesh and bone, lodged in his brain. He had scarcely fallen when the victor flew upon him, and, having no weapon of his own, smote off the monster's head with his own sword.

With a shout that rent the earth as the champion fell, the Hebrew host rushed forward to follow up the stroke upon the Philistines, who fled in panic and confusion at a result so unexpected by them. A great slaughter was committed upon them, and the pursuers returned, with many captives and much spoil. Great was the joy in Israel at this deliverance. The maidens came forth to meet the warriors with triumphal songs, of which David was made the hero, although Saul was not forgotten. They sang—

"Saul hath slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands."

This preference was heard by Saul with great displeasure, and was perhaps the first circumstance which awakened that jealousy of David which troubled the rest of his reign. Jonathan, the son of Saul, was, however, of a far different mind. His admiration of the young hero was most intense, and he hastened to cultivate an acquaintance with him, which ripened into that tender and most faithful friendship which David has rendered immortal.

Saul, although vexed, was not yet become ungrateful, nor indeed was it possible for one who had wrought so great a deed in Israel as David, to be neglected without an outrage on public opinion. The king, therefore, gave him an important command in the army. This afforded him an opportunity of distinguishing himself; and so brilliant were his exploits, and so engaging were the qualities he manifested, that his popularity daily increased, and the jealousy of the king ripened in the same proportion into dislike and hatred. As he thus gave way to evil passions, his dreadful disease returned with redoubled force; and once, when the son of Jesse was attempting to soothe him, as of old, with his harp, the king in his madness cast at him his javelin with the intention of smiting him "even to the wall;" but David evaded the stroke and left the royal presence. It was possibly for the purpose of removing the temptation to crime from himself that the king then sent him away to command the troops on the frontier; but his popularity still increasing, Saul ere long recalled him to court, and offered one of his daughters in marriage. This honour was due to David, as the king had held it out as an inducement to any one who should combat with and overcome Goliath; but it had hitherto been withheld. Now, however, the king happened to learn that an attachment had arisen between David and his daughter Michal, and he resolved to give her to him, in the hope of the connection being made the means of his ruin. With pretended liberality and kindness he declared that he required no other dowry for his daughter, than that he should distinguish himself against the enemies of Israel, in the time which must el[illegible]e between the betrothal and the actual marriage. The hope of the king was that he would be destroyed in the daring acts into which he knew that he would thus be led. But David performed all that was required of him, and returned safe and triumphant to claim his bride, who could not then be withheld from him.

This did not tend to lessen the enmity of Saul, who at length went so far as to give orders to his confidential attendants, and even to Jonathan, to seize any favourable opportunity that offered of making away with David. Jonathan, however, pleaded so earnestly for his friend, that Saul relented, "and sware, as the Lord liveth," not to slay him. After this Saul intrusted David with the command of the whole army to oppose the Philistines, who had again invaded his dominions. His usual success attended him in this expedition, the enemy being routed and completely subdued. The increase of reputation which he thus obtained exposed him anew to the wrath of the king, who on his return to court attempted to assassinate him; but not succeeding in his design, he determined to have him arrested on the following day, that he might have an opportunity of slaying him in confinement. Then fearing that he might escape during the night, he stationed guards around the house, with instructions to seize him in the morning. But David was this time saved by his wife, the faithful Michal, who gained intelligence of this design, and contrived the escape of her husband by letting him down in a basket from one of the windows. He then went for counsel and encouragement to the aged Samuel at Ramah. Saul was now grown desperate; and no sooner heard of the place of his retreat than he sent a detachment of soldiers to apprehend him. But they no sooner beheld the venerable prophet among his pupils, "the sons of the prophets," uttering their holy chants, than, under a divine influence, they laid aside all their fierceness, and sat down utterly subdued among these holy persons. Saul sent again and again, with the same result; and at length, not to be balked of his prey, he proceeded himself to Ramah; but the same influence overshadowed him; disarmed, subdued, he cast aside his upper garment, and lay down meek and humble at the feet of the prophet.

When the king had returned home, David, supposing that some salutary change might have been wrought in his mind, and that it behoved him to make one more effort to maintain his position, went also to Gibeah to consult with Jonathan respecting the course that he should take. That faithful friend promised to take means to ascertain his father's present feeling, and meanwhile enjoined him to remain concealed in the fields, without entering the town, that his arrival might not be suspected. The conversation which passed between these admirable friends as they walked together in the fields, is reported with unusual minuteness in the sacred record, and gives a vivid impression of the nobleness of Jonathan's heart, seeing that the object of his ardent and generous friendship was one whom he knew to be destined to exclude himself from the succession to the throne. But, in the emphatic language of Scripture, "He loved him as his own soul," and was well content to think that David should hereafter sit upon the throne of Israel, and had for himself no other desire than to remain his bosom friend and counsellor.

The day after this interview was the feast of the New moon, when it seems to have been the custom of the king to dine with his princes and great officers. The king, we are told, "sat upon his seat, as at other times, even upon a seat by the wall;" by which we learn that the seat of honour was then, as at present, in the East, in the corner at the upper end of the room; and it must, as now, have been in the right hand corner, from the king being able to throw his javelin. After what had passed at Ramah, the king expected that David would be present at table, in his usual place. He, however, took no notice the first day; but on the second inquired after him. Jonathan replied that he had given him leave to absent himself. On this the evil spirit raged high in the unhappy king. He broke forth into the grossest vituperation of his own son, whom he reproached in being a party to his own dishonour, for he said with bitterness, "as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom! Wherefore now, send and fetch him unto me, for he shall surely die." But Jonathan began to vindicate his friend; on which the king, quite beside himself with passion, cast his javelin at him to smite him. After this Jonathan knew that there was no hope for David, to whose hiding-place he proceeded, to make known to him this result, and to give a reluctant consent that he should seek among strangers the safety which was denied him in his own country.

Before quitting the land of Israel, David proceeded to Nob, a city of Benjamin, where the tabernacle then stood, and requested the high-priest Abimelech to provide him and his few attendants with provisions for his intended journey, as well as with armour for himself. Having been led to believe that he was upon public business which required secresy, the high-priest was prevailed upon to give him a quantity of the bread which had lately been removed from the table as shew-bread, and which, in strict propriety, it was lawful for the priests only to eat; and there being no other weapon at the tabernacle, he allowed him to have the sword which he had himself taken from Goliath, and which had afterwards been laid up in the tabernacle as a trophy of victory.

On departing from Nob, David took the somewhat strange step of proceeding to Gath, one of the chief cities of the Philistines, in the hope of being allowed to remain there under the protection of the king Achish. The officers of the king were, however, by no means inclined to overlook the victory over Goliath, and the various disgraces which the Philistine arms had sustained at his hands; and they counselled the king to avail himself of the opportunity of ridding himself of so redoubted an enemy. This so alarmed David that he feigned madness, and mimicked the actions of a lunatic so well, that he was allowed to depart unmolested.

SUNDAY XXVII.—LIFE OF CHRIST.



LEAVING the city, Jesus passed over to the Mount of Olives, and sat down there over against the temple, when his disciples took the opportunity of questioning* him on the subjects on which he had lately spoken. The prediction which he had just uttered, of the destruction of the temple, which they thought would be conjoined with the commencement of his terrestrial reign, recalled to the memory all the other events which they supposed were to happen at the commencement of the Messiah's Kingdom. They therefore ask *when* the destruction of the temple would take-place, and what would be the sign of his second coming, and end of the world which would follow that event. To the first of these questions Jesus answered by describing the signs which should precede the destruction of the temple and city, which he depicted by vivid and poetical images. But to meet their preconceived notions, he so answered the question as to make it appear that the end of the world would follow at a much later period. At the destruction of the Jewish state he would so return to take vengeance upon the Jews, and to deliver his followers from persecution, that although he himself indeed would not be visible, yet he would so manifest his majesty as that they might almost see him with their own eyes: and furthermore, that he would so return in the end of the world, and the solemn inauguration of the Messiah in his kingdom, that his glory, which had been seen only by his disciples on the first occasion, would then be manifest to all.

Our Lord declined to indicate, other than by the sign of preceding circumstances, the time in which either of these great events should occur. These signs, if carefully heeded, would be well understood. This he illustrated by the parable of the fig-tree:—"When the branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh; so, likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that the kingdom of God is near, even at the doors." The uncertainty of these events to the world at large, their unexpectedness, he then illustrated by various comparisons, such as—"There shall two be in the field, the one shall be taken and the other left; two women shall be grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken and the other left." The reason that he assigned for this reserve was, that the uncertainty might keep them in a condition of continual watchfulness and preparation. The necessity for this watchfulness and preparation was then illustrated by various striking comparisons and parables. One of these represents the different characters and conditions of persons at that day, by the parable of the different conduct of the Faithful and Unfaithful Servants under the delayed arrival of their absent lord. Another conveys the same illustration in the striking parable of the Ten Virgins, "five of whom were wise and five foolish," who being at a wedding party, and awaiting at night the coming of the bridegroom to take home his bride, slumbered while he delayed his coming, and awakening with a start when the cry was raised—"Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him," found that their lamps had gone out; while those who remained awake and watchful had their lamps ready, and entered to the marriage, from which the others were shut out. The whole parable is a striking picture of the circumstances attending the important ceremony of fetching home the bride, as it existed among the Jews, and is still preserved in several countries of the East, from the Mediterranean to the Yellow Sea. This important ceremonial of the marriage procession does not now, as it did in the time of Christ, take place by night, except in tropical countries, as India, where the heat of the day causes the preference of the night for such celebrations. There is then a great display of flambeaux and torches among the attendants, which gives a very lively idea of the details in this parable. It is probable that among the Jews the procession took place by night only during the heat of summer.

The parable of the Talents was again repeated with added particulars: and Jesus then proceeded to detail some of the circumstances of that solemn judgment which he will himself return to hold over all men, when every one shall, according to his deserts, be conveyed to the regions of bliss or woe.

We are not so minutely informed of our Lord's proceedings on the next day, being Wednesday; but he doubtless went again to the city, as we are informed generally for the whole period that "In the day-time he was teaching in the temple: but at night he went out and abode in the Mount of Olives. And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple for to hear him." The only fact which transpires is, that Jesus reminded his disciples that it was now two days to the Passover, when "the Son of Man is betrayed to be crucified;" which is the first time that he distinctly and without a metaphor expressed the kind of death which he knew to await him. It seems to have been on this day also that the members of the Sanhedrim held a private sitting in the house of the high-priest, Caiaphas, where they deliberated on the best means of apprehending Jesus and effecting his death, with the least danger of creating an uproar among the people.

Unhappily, they found among Christ's immediate followers one but too willing to assist their views. This was Judas Iscariot, who came to them, and agreed, for thirty pieces of silver, to seek an opportunity for betraying him into their hands. The motive of this wretched man has been very much disputed. The more simple and harsher view is that which holds that he betrayed his master to death for this sum of money; but this has been judged inconsistent with the fact of his repentance so soon as he saw that his Lord was actually condemned. This seems to show that he expected a different result, and the paltry sum of money might easily have been acquired by one who had charge of the bag, without staining his soul with so black a crime. Upon the whole, we may readily believe that Judas was a man whose character was of less unmixed evil than the popular judgment deems; although it will always be difficult to determine the precise considerations by which his conduct was influenced. It has been supposed by some, that in the conviction that Christ could and would, as on former occasions, deliver himself out of their hands, he intended merely to trifle with the priests in making this offer to them. But others think the whole proceeding best accounted for by supposing that Judas, annoyed at the tardiness of Jesus in openly avowing himself to be the Messiah, and of taking upon him the great power which belonged to him in that character, was solicitous to place him in a position which would compel him to declare himself, and by that act commence his reign on the earth.

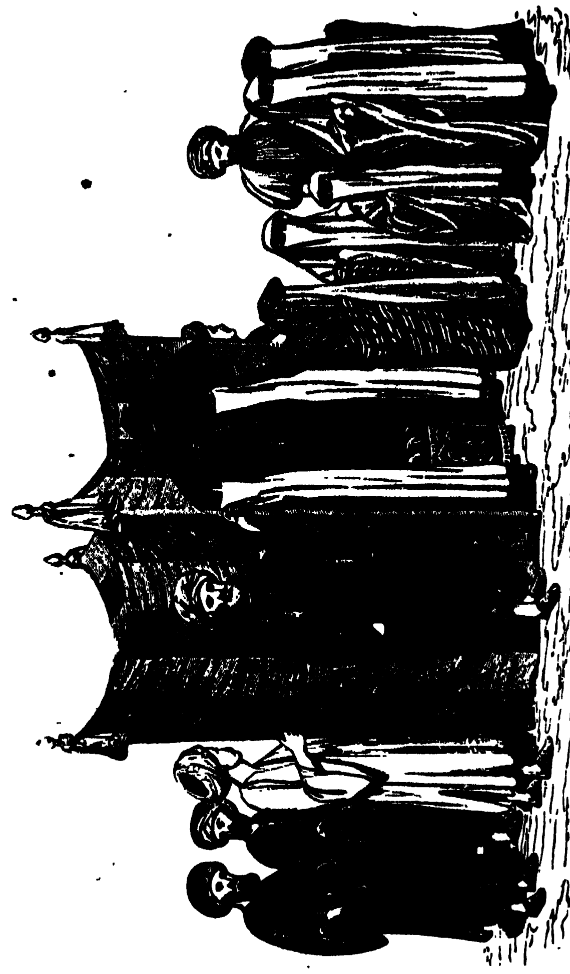
Thursday at length arrived, when all the inhabitants of Jerusalem prepared to celebrate the Passover. At this feast strangers from all parts of the land flocked to Jerusalem, and the residents felt themselves bound to set apart and make ready all the spare rooms in their houses, for the use of the strangers in celebrating the Passover. The ceremony itself consisted in eating a lamb with particular ceremonies, in commemoration of the deliverance from Egypt. As it was necessary that a lamb should be eaten and that none of it should be left, parties sufficiently large for the purpose were usually formed. The number who sat at the table was usually from twelve to fifteen; and as our Lord and his apostles were thirteen, they were enabled to take this last and solemn meal by themselves, without the presence of strangers.

The time being fully come, Jesus sent Peter and John into the city, and told them that they would meet a man bearing a pitcher of water whom they were to follow, and make ready the Passover in the house to which he went. It so happened: and on asking the master of the house to show them the chamber he had prepared for strangers, they were conducted to "a large upper chamber, ready furnished and prepared" with the requisite seats, table, and utensils. Here the Passover was made ready by the disciples, and in the evening Jesus came and sat down with them to eat of it.

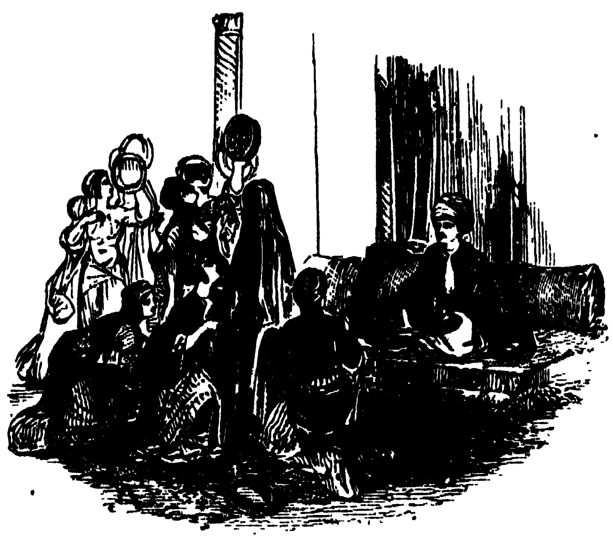
The substantial part of the supper being ended, a dispute arose among the disciples respecting their precedence, "who should be the greatest" in their Lord's coming kingdom. This shows how little they had profited by recent instructions. And Jesus, knowing that they would soon understand the truth full well, did not this time attempt to undeceive them; but he neglected not to seize the occasion of teaching them the lesson that humility and self-denial constituted true greatness in the kingdom which he came to establish in the hearts of men. He left the table, and laid aside his outer robe, and having taken a basin and towel, proceeded to wash his disciples' feet, an act usually performed by the humblest menials in a house. All the disciples submitted in silence to this proceeding, except Peter, who, being much shocked to see his Lord thus employed, protested that he should never wash his feet. But when Jesus gravely answered, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me," the apostle, with the usual impulsiveness of his character, cried, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my feet." Jesus answered, that washing the feet sufficed; and when he had again taken his place at the table, he proceeded to explain the instruction he intended to convey, which is shortly stated in the words, "If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."



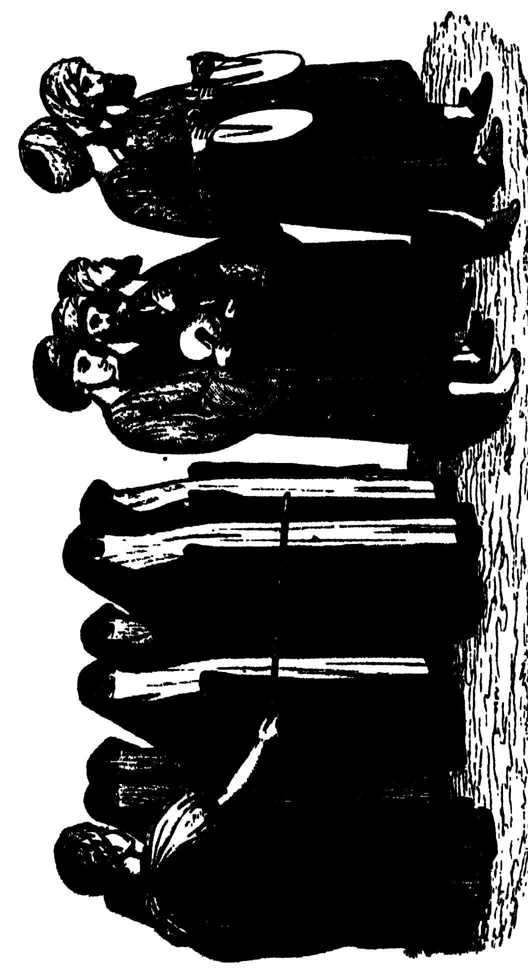
679.—Marriage Procession of a Hindoo Bridegroom.
Gorymdaith Briodasol Priodfab Hindwaidd.



683.—Bridal Procession: Modern Egypt.
Gorymdaith Briodasol: yr Aipht Ddiweddar.



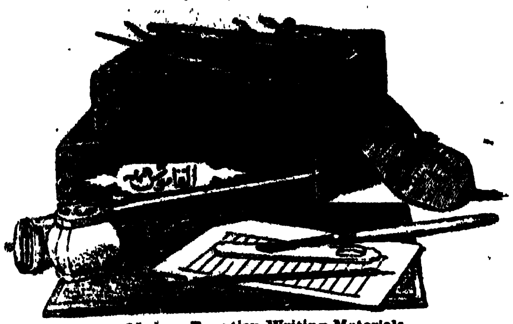
681.—Displaying of the Bride.
Arddangos y Briodferch.



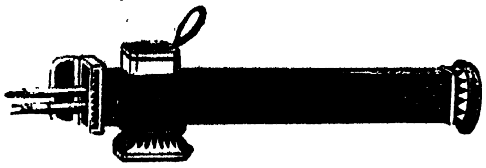
682.—Bridal Procession. Modern Egypt.
Gorymdaith Briodasol: yr Aipht Ddiweddar.



680.—Marriage Procession of a Bride in Lebanon.
Gorymdaith Briodasol Priodferch yn Libanus.



684.—Modern Egyptian Writing Materials.
Offerynau Ysgrifenu Aiphtaidd Diweddar.



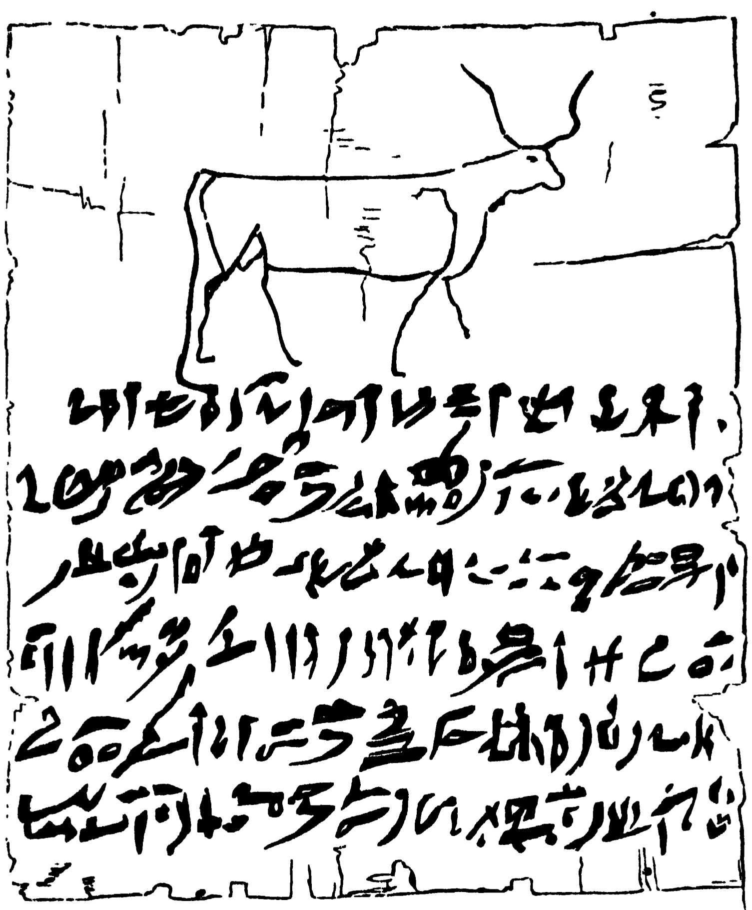
685.—Modern Egyptian Writing-Case.
Gwain Ysgrifenu Aiphtaidd Diweddar.



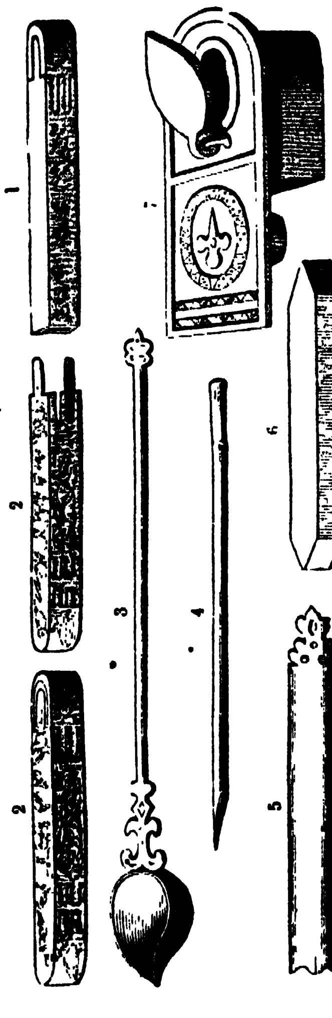
686.—Egyptian Scribe.
Ysgrifenydd Aiphtaidd.



687.—Female reading, with a Box of Rolls.
Benyw yn darllen, gyda Blwch o Blyg-llyfrau.



688.—Fragment of an Egyptian Papyrus Roll.
Darn o Blyg-llyfr Papyrus Aiphtaidd.

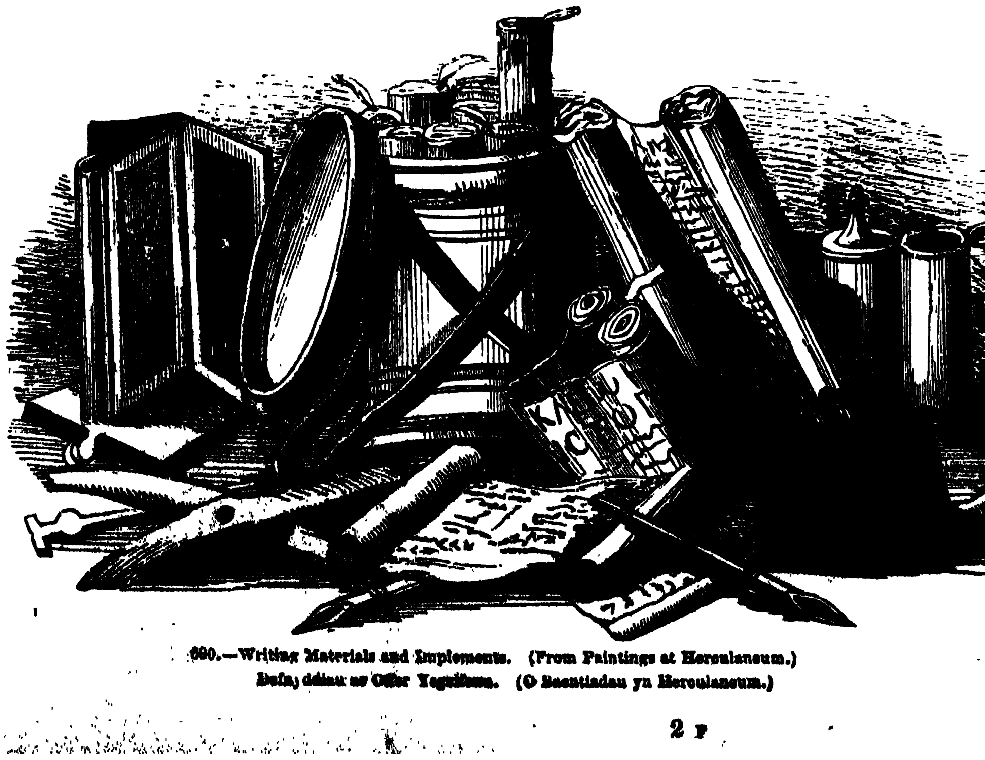


689.—Persian Instruments of Writing

1. Kalmdân, or Case for Pen and Ink; 2, 2. Parts of the same, separate; 3. Spoon for watering the Ink; 4. Pen, formed of a Reed; 5. Thin piece of Horn, on which the Pen is mended; 6. Whetstone; 7. Ink-holder, with a Compass.

Offer Ysgrifenu Persiaidd.

1. Calmdân, neu Gistan i Bin ac Inge; 2, 2. Rhanau o'r unrhyw ar wahân; 3. Llwy i ddyfrhau'r Inge; 4. Pin wedi ei wneud o Gorsen; 5. Dernyn teneu o Gorn, ar yr hwn y gwellëir y Pin; 6. Calan Hogi; 7. Corn du Ysgrifenu, gyda Chwmpas.



690.—Writing Materials and Implements. (From Paintings at Herculaneum.)
Defnyddiau ac Offer Ysgrifenu. (O Beintiadau yn Herculaneum.)



691.—Female reading a Roll.
Benyw yn darllen Plyg-llyfr.

SUNDAY XXVIII.—THE PROPHET EZEKIEL.

WRITING-MATERIALS.

BY bringing together different passages in the prophet Ezekiel, we obtain some interesting facts for the illustration of the writing-materials in use among the ancient Israelites.

In Ezek. ii. 9, 10, the prophet describes a vision which he saw of a hand containing a roll, and which, when spread out before him, was found to be "written *within and without*."

The word translated "book" in the authorized version, must generally be understood to signify a roll, or a large surface of written parchment, or other substance, rolled and unrolled for use. An ancient book was therefore in all respects a very different thing in appearance and use from the trim and imposing rectangular shapes which stand so orderly upon our shelves, and which open into many hundreds of leaves. They consisted of one long sheet formed by attaching together a number of small pieces, and in the more finished specimens the junction was so smooth and accurate, as to be scarcely perceptible even to a close inspection. Josephus, in his account of the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, gives an interesting notice of this: "As the old men came in with the presents which the high-priest had given them to bring to the king (Ptolemy Philadelphus), and with the things on which they had these laws written *in letters of gold*, he addressed some questions to them respecting these sacred books; and when they had removed the covers in which they were wrapped, they showed him *the skins, and the closeness of the joinings, which could not be detected, so exactly were they connected one with another*."

The sheet thus extended was rolled upon its own substance, if not large; but if large, it was rolled round a stick in the same manner that we roll maps; or if of unusual length, it was rolled round two sticks, the wrappings beginning at the two extremities, and being continued till they met in the middle. In order to read a portion of the book it was necessary to unroll it to that particular place, from which peculiarity the word *volume* is derived, which comes from a word having the same meaning as *roll*. The writing was not in continuous lines throughout the roll, which would have required the whole to be unrolled in following a single line, but was written in columns, as is the case at present in the rolls used in the Jewish Synagogues.

The rolls were commonly written on one side only, but sometimes on both sides, as was the case with two ancient rolls which the Rev. J. Hartley saw in the monastery of Megaspelaion. "I observed two very beautiful rolls containing the Liturgy of St. Chrysostom, and that attributed by the Greeks to St. James. You began to read by *unfolding* (Luke iv. 17), and you continue to read and unfold, till at last you arrive at the stick to which the roll is fastened. Then you turn the parchment round, and continue to read on the other side of the roll, folding it gradually up, till you complete the Liturgy." It was thus written within and without, and will serve to convey an intelligible and correct notion of the rolls described by Ezekiel and John (Rev. v. 1); the idea conveyed by this as a symbol is fulness, or rather of redundance to overflowing, the writing being seldom carried over to the other side but when the writer found that the inner surface did not afford sufficient space for all that he wished to write.

The substance of these rolls was of linen skins, parchment, or papyrus. There is no Scriptural intimation of the materials of which the "books" it mentions were composed; but they were certainly of some one of these substances. It is well known that linen was employed for writing long before the invention of papyrus; and specimens are still found in the written bandages of Egyptian mummies. The use of linen was certainly known to the Jews in the time of Moses, as the priestly dress was of that material; and there are some biblical scholars who think that the originals of the Pentateuch and other books of the Old Testament were written on rolls of linen. Our own impression is, that whenever in the *Old* Testament a *book* or *roll* is mentioned, it was either of skin or linen; but those of the *New* Testament may have been either of parchment or papyrus, seeing that both were then invented, and had come into use. It seems probable that the epistles, &c. of that time were written on papyrus; but that the books of the law, &c., which are described as being read in the Synagogues, were then, as at present, of parchment. We find no evidence that papyrus was in actual use among the Jews in the time of the Old Testament, although it may have been known to Moses, and could hardly be unknown to the prophets, by one of whom indeed (Isa. xix. 7) the rush from which it was made is distinctly mentioned. But in the time of the New Testament the use of papyrus had become more common, in consequence of the preference given to parchment for the higher class of writings. Parchment itself—an improved preparation of skins—was invented by Eumenes, king of Pergamos, about two hundred years before the Christian era, and soon superseded the flexible skins which had previously been in use. The employment of such skins did not, however, altogether cease, and seems to be still preserved in the Synagogue rolls used by the Jews in some parts of the East.

In Ezek. ix. 2, 3, 11, the prophet describes a vision in which he saw six men armed with weapons of slaughter, and "one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's ink-horn by his side," or rather "upon his loins." That this man was clad with linen seems to imply that he was a priest; and it is remarkable that most men connected with religious establishments in Western Asia (for there are no priests properly speaking) still wear the ink-horn in their girdle as the symbol of learning, supplying the dagger which *all* who do not profess to be men of the pen wear in the same place. Judging from the way in which Scribes are mentioned in the New Testament, we may suppose that the priestly scribes occupied a position not unlike that of the same body of men in Egypt, where they ranked among the principal persons of the country. There were doubtless inferior scribes among and out of the great Levitical body, answering to the same class in Egypt, and the Arab *katebs* of the present day, or the *scrivani* of Italy, who for a small trifle compose and pen a petition to government, settle accounts, and write letters or other documents, for persons who are untaught or too idle to do so for themselves.

As there is reason to conclude that the ink-horns, or rather pen-cases, of the ancient Hebrews were similar to those still used in the East, a short description of them may be interesting. They are principally of two sorts. The one in general use on the west of the Euphrates is that marked as modern Egyptian in the engraving. It is a flat case, about nine inches long by an inch and a quarter broad, and half an inch thick, the hollow of which serves to contain the reed-pens, penknife, and other implements. The case has at one end a bulky head or projection, which is the vessel for containing the ink, and which opens by a lid at the top. The whole is of polished brass or silver, and as worn in the girdle has, to one unacquainted with it, very much the appearance of some formidable weapon. The case opens at the upper end by a lid, and is found to contain, besides the reeds and penknife, a piece of horn or ivory, on which the pen is laid to be nibbed. Reeds are far preferable to quill-pens for the Eastern characters of writing, as they are also for writing Hebrew; and those now in use are certainly such as the ancient Jews employed. Indeed, European scholars prefer reeds to pens when they can obtain them, for writing the Hebrew and other Oriental characters. The reeds, the ink-horns, and all the arrangements and materials of writing, are unsuited to inks so fluid as those which we employ; and those actually in use are very thick and gummy.

The other "ink-horn," used east of the Euphrates, especially in Persia, is different from the former: the only part usually of metal is the inkstand, which is contained, with the other apparatus, in a long case open at top, which when not in use is kept in an outer case, in and out of which it slips like a drawer. The case itself is usually of papier mâché, or light wood, highly glazed, and enriched with gilding and painting.

Nothing can well be more different than the external appearance of these two utensils, although the contents are nearly the same. Of the two, the former is the most convenient, and best suited for the girdle; but the latter is the most light and elegant. It is, of course, impossible to say which of the two bore the greatest resemblance to that in use among the ancient Israelites.

These skins seem in some cases to have been dyed. That the ancient Israelites were acquainted with the art of dyeing skins appears from the fact that the covering of the tabernacle was partly formed of dyed rams'-skins; and that they were also in the habit of writing on materials thus prepared seems to be attested, or rather illustrated, by the existence of several ancient copies of the Hebrew Scriptures on rolls of skin. In the library of the University of Cambridge is preserved a MS. roll of the five books of Moses in Hebrew, written on rams'-skins dyed red. This roll is forty-eight feet in length, by twenty-eight feet in breadth; but as the book of Leviticus is wholly wanting, and a considerable portion of Deuteronomy, it is probable that the roll in its original state had been much longer.

SUNDAY XXVIII.—BIBLE HISTORY.

ON returning to his own land, David found it expedient to avoid inhabited places, and to seek refuge in caverns, woods, and wildernesses. In the first place he betook himself to the great cave of Adullam, where many of his relations, who had become obnoxious to Saul, joined him, some to seek his protection, and others to afford him their assistance. Here also came to him a number of men of broken fortunes and unsettled dispositions, who were glad to put themselves under the command of so renowned a leader, and who formed a small but valorous troop of about four hundred men. It was about this time that the king of Moab, being at variance with Saul, sent a messenger to David to invite him to his court. He accordingly repaired thither, and after having secured a quiet retreat for his aged parents, returned with his few troops into the land of Judah, where his friends were most numerous, and abode for a time in "the forest of Hareth."

When Saul heard of David's return, he called his attendants and courtiers around him, and threatened his utmost vengeance against any of them who failed to render him every assistance in discovering David, or to reveal whatever came to their knowledge of his movements and designs. On this, an officer named Doeg, by birth an Edomite, who had been present at Nob when the high-priest assisted David, stepped forward, and reported with considerable exaggeration what he had witnessed. The dark rage of Saul rose high at this information; and he immediately sent to Nob to call Ahimelech and the attending priests before him. The summons was promptly obeyed. When the king charged Ahimelech with conspiracy and treason for the assistance rendered to the son of Jesse, the high-priest firmly but respectfully vindicated himself, and declared his perfect ignorance of the alleged designs or intentions of David when he rendered him assistance as to the king's son-in-law. But the thirst for blood was strong upon the maddened king, and he was but too happy to find any objects on which with the slightest show of reason it might be gratified. Without heeding the defence, he turned to his guard and ordered them to slay the priests of the Lord. But they were for the moment protected by their sacred character, and every one shrunk from the deed. On this the king turned to the accuser Doeg, and commanded him to slay them; and from this foreign mercenary he found ready obedience. Eighty-one of the priests of God fell that day under his sword; and he then, under authority from the king, proceeded to Nob, where, with the assistance of others, he destroyed the families of the priests resident there. The only person of the priestly family who escaped was Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, who fled for safety to David in the forest of Hareth. He was well received, and became the priest or chaplain of the band.

About this time the city of Keilah in Judah was besieged by the Philistines, and David, by the Lord's direction, hastened with his small troop to the relief of the place. He succeeded in defeating the enemy, and putting them to flight, and on retiring from the pursuit, entered with much spoil the city he had delivered. When Saul heard that he was in this place, he prepared to march against him, intending to blockade the city, and compel the inhabitants to give up David. But he made his escape from the place before the king arrived with his troops, and withdrew into the wilderness of Ziph. The people of the town of that name, however, made the place of his retreat known to the king, who immediately marched in pursuit of him. Of this movement David received timely warning, and withdrew into the wilderness of Maon, whither he was closely pursued by Saul. The royal troop had nearly surrounded David and his small company, when the king received intelligence that the Philistines had invaded his dominions, which compelled him to abandon his present object, and march against them.

David was thus delivered from a most dangerous position. But the king had no sooner repelled the Philistines than he resumed **with eagerness the pursuit of David, who had by this time taken refuge in the rocky wilderness of Engedi. The king followed him there; and on his arrival, went into a cave unaccompanied by any of his attendants. It happened that David was at that very time in the farther parts of this same cave, and was urged by his men to avail himself of this opportunity of ridding himself of his inveterate enemy, who was so keenly bent on his destruction. But the son of Jesse repelled with horror the suggestion to "stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed." He wished, however, to let Saul see how completely he had been in his power, and therefore drew near to him stealthily, and cut off the skirt of his robe. When the king had quitted the cave, David went out also, and called after him, "My lord the king!" and when Saul looked back, he bowed low before him, and proceeded to address him in very forcible but respectful and even pathetic language.** He assumed that the king had been misled by ill advisers and slanderous reports, and justified his own fidelity and the innocency of his intentions; in proof of which he produced the skirt, which had just been severed from his robe. Saul could not withstand this; he was for the moment convinced of David's innocence, and of his own guilt in pursuing him thus inveterately. His stern nature was softened, and his diseased mind rightened by a gush of tender emotions. He said, "Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice and wept." He admitted that under the same circumstances he should not have acted so generously; he avowed his knowledge that David was his destined successor in the throne, and declared that his mind would be satisfied if he would pledge himself by an oath not to extirpate his posterity when he came to the crown. David most willingly entered into the required engagement; after which they separated, Saul returning to his capital, and the son of Jesse, who had but little faith in the king's temporary convictions, withdrawing into the wilderness of Paran (B.C. 1061).

About this time the prophet Samuel died, and the people, mindful of his long and devoted services to the nation, and fully sensible of the great loss they had sustained, assembled in large numbers at Ramah to assist at his funeral, and to make lamentations for him.

While David was in the wilderness of Paran, into which the cattle-owners of Judah were accustomed to send out their flocks and herds for pasture, David, although obliged to live much after the manner of the Bedouins, restrained his troop from disturbing the abundant flocks of a wealthy sheep-master called Nabal, and, on the contrary, protected them from the depredations of the Arabs. Afterwards, when he returned northward, he heard that Nabal was engaged in shearing his sheep; and, as the season was one of festivity, and much provision was usually laid up for the occasion, David sent to beg that some victuals might be furnished to his troop, in acknowledgment of the part he had acted in the desert. This was refused by Nabal in highly insulting language, which David resented so deeply that he immediately put his troop in motion to wreak vengeance upon him and his. But on the road he was met by Nabal's wife, Abigail, who had expected some such result from her husband's churlishness, of which she no sooner heard than she directed her ass to be saddled, and, attended by two servants, she set forth with a liberal present of choice provisions to meet and pacify the incensed warrior. In this, by her good sense, address, and comeliness, she prevailed so well, that David was thankful, on second thoughts, for having been prevented in executing his fell purpose; and when he afterwards heard that Nabal was dead, he sent and solicited the widow to become his wife, when she was found to be nothing loath to share the destinies of the handsome hero and future King of Israel. David had before this entered into marriage with Ahinoam, a woman of Jezreel; his first wife, Michal, Saul's daughter, being separated from him, and bestowed by her father upon another person named Phalti.

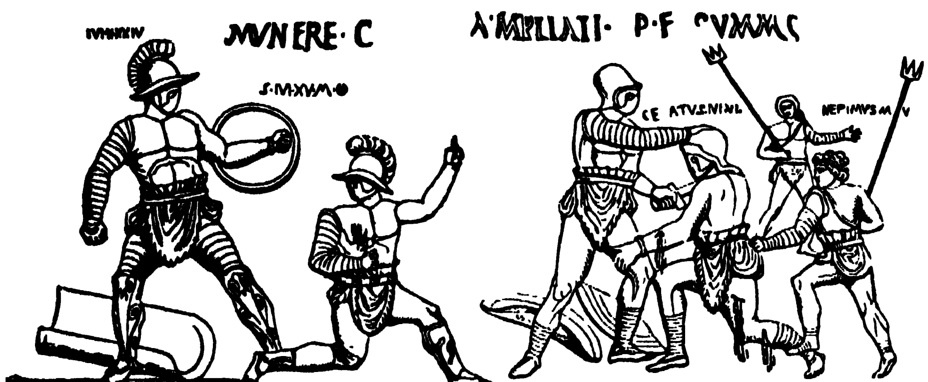
After this, David removed from the wilderness of Paran to the hill Hachilah, in the wilderness of Ziph, and the inhabitants of the town so called again sent tidings to Saul of the circumstance. All his convictions and good resolutions had by this time passed away, and he was prepared to pursue the son of Jesse with all his former eagerness. He hastened after him at the head of three thousand chosen men; and having arrived, he rested his troops during that night, resolving to attack him on the following morning. David, however, succeeded during the night in secretly entering the camp of Saul, attended only by his cousin Abishai, and advancing to the place where the spear planted in the ground marked the station of the chief, without being perceived by the guards, who soundly slept, he took away the cruse of water which stood beside the king, and also the spear which was planted at his bolster, and then withdrew, after resisting the solicitation of Abishai for permission to destroy him as he slept. David then repaired to a safe point on an eminence **at some distance, and in a loud voice called to Abner, the captain of Saul's host, reproving him for his negligent guard of the royal person, and held up the spear and the cruse of water, to show the danger to which the king had been exposed, and how completely it had been in his power to destroy him if he had been so inclined. Saul overheard all this, and his heart smote him. He could not but feel that, after what had passed at the former interview, David**



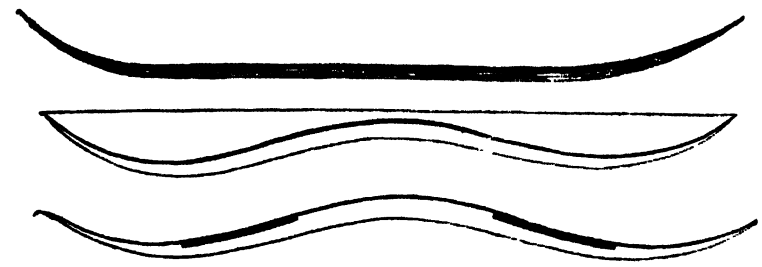
692.—Phrygian, with Coat of Ringed Mail.
Phrygiad, gyda Llurig Fodrwyog.



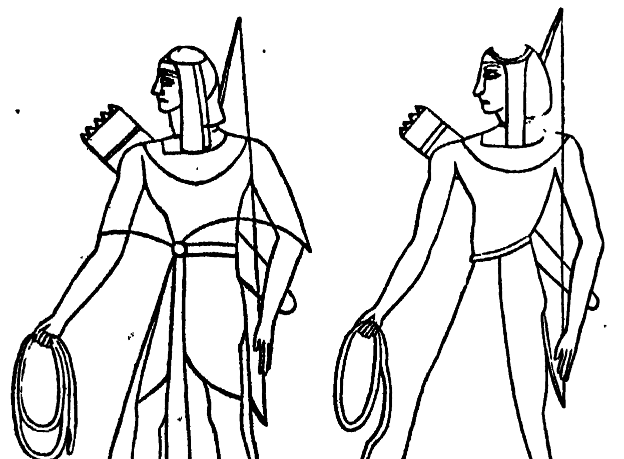
693.—Scale-Armour. Mounted Dacian.
Llurig Emog. Daciad ar Farch.



694.



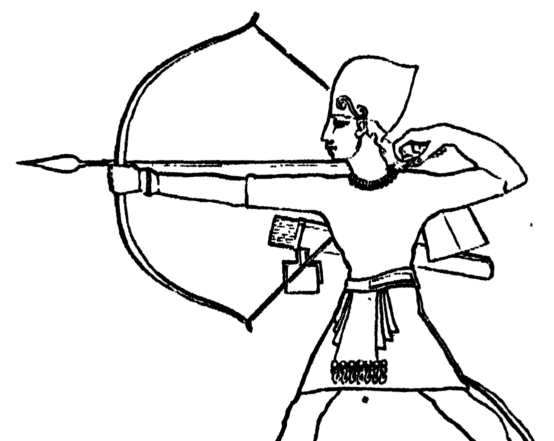
695.—Bows.
Bwau.



696.—From an Egyptian Bas-relief at Thebes.
O Faslun Aiphtaidd yn Thebes.



697.—From a Bas-relief at Tackt-i-Bostan.
O Faslun yn Tackt-i-Bostan.



698.—From a Bas-relief at Thebes.
O Faslun yn Thebes.



701.—Brook Kedron, Valley of Jehoshaphat. Showing the Summit of Absalom's Tomb.
Aber Cedron, Dyffryn Jehosaphat. Yn cangos Crib Beddrod Absalom.



700.—Abigail. (Adapted from Berghem.)
Abigail. (Wedi ei gyfaddasu o Berghem.)



699.—Presents to a Bedouin Chief.
Anrhegion i Bennaeth Bedowiniaid.

had stronger reason than before to feel aggrieved and wrathful; and this act of generous forbearance struck him even more forcibly than the former had done. He could not restrain his rising emotions, but cried, "Is that thy voice, my son David?" and in answer to the firm and earnest remonstrance of Jesse's son, he admitted without reserve the guilt and folly of his own conduct:—"I have sinned; return, my son David, for I will no more do thee harm, because my life was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly." It is these touches of relenting nature, these gleams of light, beaming now and then through the fissures of his fractured mind, which create an interest in behalf of this unhappy king, and preserve him from aversion or contempt. A mind thus capable of feeling and appreciating a noble and generous action could not itself be naturally ignoble or ungenerous.

David, however, had little confidence in the permanency of these salutary impressions on the king's mind, and, so far from accepting his invitation to return to court, he deemed it right to leave the country entirely. He therefore again repaired to Gath with his followers, who had ere this increased in number to six hundred. It seems a strange step again to venture where he had before been so ill received; but he was now in very different circumstances, and it is not unlikely that he had received from king Achish an intimation that he might now reckon upon his protection. To prevent jealousies, the Philistine king presented him with the town of Ziklag as a residence for himself and followers, and here he was soon joined by a considerable number of adherents from his own tribe of Judah.

Not long after they had been settled in this place, the Philistines resolved to invade the land of Israel, and the king of Gath called upon David to join the expedition. This was a dangerous and difficult dilemma, and David felt that he could not, without great danger, refuse to accompany the Philistines in their march against his countrymen. He therefore went, probably leaving his course in the field to be determined by circumstances. But when the Philistine forces from the different states met at Aphek, the other chiefs and princes expressed surprise at the presence of David, and, being very suspicious of his intentions, prevailed upon Achish to send him back to Ziklag.

On returning thither, David found that during his absence the place had been attacked and fired by the Amalekites, who not only carried away all the substance of David's people, but had also taken their wives and families as captives.

So great were the rage and consternation of David's men at this discovery, that he had well nigh become the victim of their blind fury, for they talked of stoning him to death. "But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God;" and referred the matter to him through the priest Abiathar, by whom he received a favourable answer, whereby his followers were pacified. They then hastened southward in pursuit. During the march they fell in with an Egyptian slave, who, falling sick on the road, had been abandoned by his master, one of the Amalekites who had assisted at the sack of Ziklag, and who, being refreshed by David's men, offered to lead them to the camp of the Amalekites. These marauders were found enjoying themselves in supposed safety, eating, and drinking, and dancing, because of the great spoil they had won. In this condition they were quite unprepared for the vigorous assault of David's brave followers, and only four hundred of them, who fled upon swift camels escaped the sword.

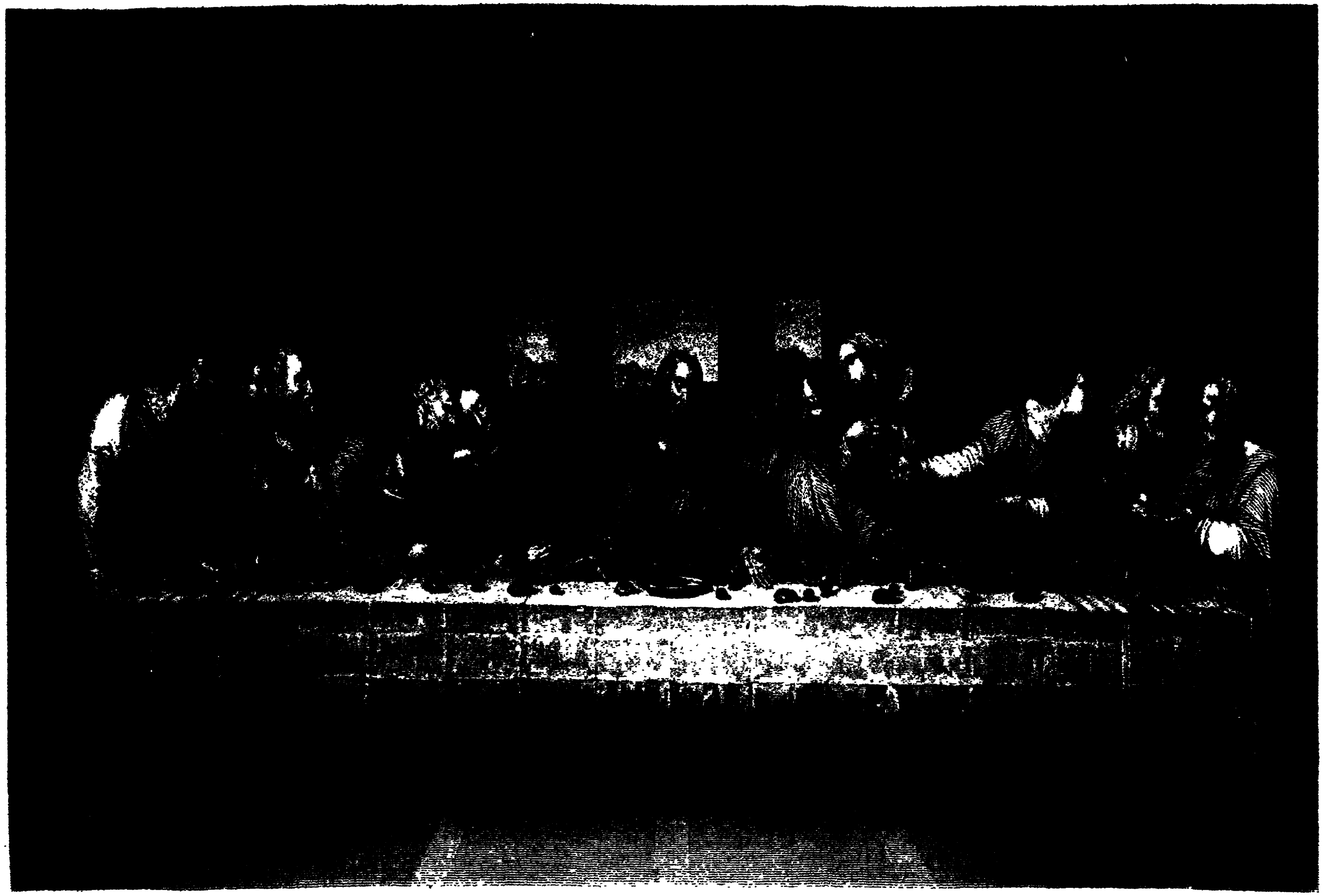
While David was engaged on this expedition, the attention of all Israel was fixed upon the great and decisive action between their king and the Philistines.

The armies lay encamped before each other, the Philistines at Shunem and the Israelites on the mountain of Gilboa, when, the night before the action, Saul, anxious and alarmed that he could obtain no intimation of the Divine will through the channels which were open under the theocratical institutions, left the camp at night and went to consult a reputed sorceress who resided in the neighbouring village of Endor. He went disguised; but the woman, if she had never seen him before, could not but recognise the king of Israel, by the nature of his questions, and by the towering stature for which he was renowned throughout the land. He required her "to bring up Samuel;" and accordingly the king beheld ascending from the earth the figure of "an old man covered with a mantle;" but whether this was really the shade of Samuel, as the king believed, or a phantom resembling him, has been much contested. Saul, however, prostrated himself before the figure; and in answer to the question—"Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?" answered—"God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets nor by dreams; therefore I have called upon thee, to make known unto me what I shall do." The reply, uttered in severe language, announced that the time was come for the accomplishment of his doom, and indicated to him the fatal scene which the next day saw accomplished on Mount Gilboa. Stunned by this intelligence, and exhausted by long fasting and anxiety, that unhappy king fell prostrate on the ground; and it was not without difficulty that he was so far restored as to be able to take a little food before he quitted the dwelling of the necromancer.

The next day the opposed hosts joined battle, and Saul acted like one who was determined to deserve, if he could not win, the victory. But the Philistines attacked his position with so much resolution, that the Israelites fled before them, or were cut in pieces in the attempt to escape. The sacred historian seems to state the superior skill of the Philistines in the use of the bow as the proximate cause of this defeat; the weapons of the Hebrews themselves being chiefly the spear and shield. In vain did the king attempt repeatedly to rally them, and lead them forward to renew the action: the disorder was complete. The king, supported by a few faithful friends, maintained his ground till he was mortally wounded by an arrow, and his valiant sons lay dead at his feet. Escape was then hopeless; and dreading, worse than death, the ignominious treatment to which he should be exposed if he fell alive into the hands of the Philistines, he implored his armour-bearer to thrust him through with his sword. The youth, overcome by his fears, and by a very natural reluctance to shed the blood of his master, the Lord's anointed, for once refused obedience; on which Saul, seeing that no time was to be lost, fell upon his own sword and expired; and the faithful armour-bearer immediately followed the example. The body of the king was found by the Philistines, who took off the head, and sent it to one of their cities to be fastened in the temple of Dagon, and his armour in that of Ashtaroth, as trophies of their victory, and in honour of their idols. The bodies of Saul and his sons they gibbeted on the wall of Beth-shan,—and this circumstance gave occasion for an act of generous valour which affords a refreshing contrast to many of the transactions of this period. The inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead, on the other side Jordan, no sooner heard of this ignominy, than they were roused by a grateful remembrance of the deliverance which Saul had wrought for them at the beginning of his reign, and determined to rescue his remains from insult. Passing over the river by night, they stole away the mangled remains of the king and his sons from the wall, and bore them away to their own place, where, after bestowing upon them the usual honours, they buried the ashes under a tree, and fasted seven days.

At the news of the defeat in Gilboa, terror spread through all the tribes of Israel. Even those who dwelt beyond the Jordan were no sooner informed of it than they retired into their strongholds in the mountains, leaving their cities in the plain to be occupied by the Philistines.

David had not long returned to Ziklag, when the tidings of the events were brought to him by a young Amalekite, who brought with him the diadem and regal armlets of the fallen monarch. Judging that it would please David, the Amalekite embellished his account by claiming the merit of having put the king to death, at his own request, after he had been mortally wounded. But instead of obtaining the reward he expected, David, who had himself more than once testified the highest respect for the royal person, ordered him to be put to death for having presumptuously lifted his hand against the Lord's anointed. He also manifested every token of sincere grief and sorrow on this occasion by rending his clothes and by other marks of mourning and lamentation. Especially was David grieved and distressed for his beloved friend Jonathan, and the lamentation which he composed on the occasion claims our admiration not less for the beauty of its composition than for the tone of generous affection by which it is animated. Many versions and imitations of it have been attempted, but none of them approach the exquisite beauty of the original.



The Last Supper.

SUNDAY XXVIII.—LIFE OF CHRIST.



IT was just after this that Jesus took occasion to intimate that among the trusted disciples then present, there was one who would betray him to his enemies. This gave them great concern; and, after a pause, they began to ask him severally, "Lord, is it I?" At this time they were seated, or rather reclining on the bench, or triclinium, which enclosed the table; and they were placed in such a manner that the "beloved disciple," John, lay with his head towards his master's bosom; and to him Peter beckoned that he should put the question more distinctly. He did so, by asking, probably in a low voice, "Lord, who is it?" To which Jesus answered, probably also in a subdued voice, "He to whom I shall give the sop when I have dipped it;" and immediately he dipped the sop and gave it to Judas. It was usual after the second cup of wine at the Paschal meal, for the father of the house, or head of the party, to take a piece of unleavened bread, break it in pieces and give a bit to each of those present, most commonly after having dipped it in the broth. This was probably the "sop" in question, and we may suppose that it was the turn of Judas to receive it.

On this, Judas, who, as being near enough to receive this, had probably overheard John's question, asked in a low voice, "Lord, is it I?" And was answered in an under tone, "It is thou," by Jesus, who then added aloud, "What thou doest, do quickly:" on which Judas immediately left the place. The disciples generally had evidently not caught this conversation, for they supposed that he had gone forth on some charge connected with the distribution of alms from the common purse with which he was intrusted. But in fact he went to the priests to arrange the plan of operation for betraying his Lord to them that very night, in completion of the engagement into which he had already entered.

As the Passover repast began late in the evening, and it was now already more than half-completed, the night must then have already set in when the traitor separated himself from this circle of humility and love, and hastened through the lonesome darkness to the enemies of Jesus.

When Judas had actually withdrawn, and with that the certainty of his horrible deed was fully determined, the consciousness of victory over sin and death rose triumphant to the mind of the Divine Saviour, and absorbed for the moment all other considerations; and he said, "*Now* the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in him." He then intimated to the Apostles that the time was near in which he was to be taken from them, and added, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." Although our Lord had more than once expressed himself with sufficient accuracy and plainness respecting his approaching death, and even the manner of it, the disciples, still warped by their early notions respecting the Messiah and his reign, could not understand his words in the sense he intended to convey. Possibly they thought only of a temporary removal of the Redeemer, through which he might escape from treason and from the plots of his enemies. Therefore the ardent Peter endeavoured to lead him to a more definite explanation—"Lord, whither goest thou?" Jesus answered, "Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards." Gathering from this, perhaps, that some danger was connected with the removal of his beloved Master, Peter rejoined, "Why cannot I follow thee *now?* I will lay down my life for thy sake." But Jesus, looking through the soul, perceived that this declaration arose more from a swell of generous feeling, than from a firmly-grounded purpose; and therefore warned him to look well to his own heart: "Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice."

The wine-cup was repeatedly handed round during the Paschal suppers, and the Jewish writers inform us that the wine was mixed with water: although, indeed, this would be scarcely needed with such weak wines as are used at meal-times in the East. When they had come to the last of the wine-cups usually taken, our Lord proceeded to institute the Sacrament of the Holy Communion, in the well-known words which implied that the drinking of the cup and eating of the bread was henceforth to be taken as an act commemorative of him—the wine of his blood shed, and the bread of his body given up for the sins of the world. By this act, he in fact formally established a new religion, to be ratified by his outpoured blood and wounded body, of which ratification the wine and bread were to become the symbols.

After this, our Lord perceiving that the disciples were still very much distressed at what he had before said, confirmed as it was by the solemn intimations of the rite which had been just established, proceeded to console them in the beautiful discourse which occupies the fourteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, beginning "Let not your heart be troubled," &c. In this he first consoles them by the consideration, that by going from them (that is, by his death and passion), mansions on high would be prepared for them; but being interrupted by Thomas with a remark which showed that he was still thinking of an earthly palace, Jesus proceeded to explain that *he* was himself the way to this high heritage, and that only through faith could its enjoyment be secured. This faith they were to manifest by acts of obedience to what they had already heard from him, or might hereafter be taught; and especially by obedience to his new commandment of mutual love. Then, to excite them to the fulfilment of his commands, he added a new promise, that of a Helper. During his stay among them, their weakness and faithlessness had been so great, that they had never been able to dispense with him as a stay and support; and now that he was about to leave them, "another Comforter" would come to them, from him and from the Father, "even the Spirit of Truth," by whom they should be guided aright, and be taught much which had hitherto been purposely left obscure and unexplained.

Jesus then arose as if to depart, saying, "Arise, let us go hence;" but the importance of these last precious moments, and his love to his disciples, constrained him, and he sat down again. Taking occasion from this slight movement, that he *abides* with them although he departs, then became the theme of his discourse; and he warned them that adhesion to him in faith, and to each other in brotherly love, was the only way in which they could prosper. That this might be the better understood, he employed a similitude derived from a well-known object, namely, a vine and its branches—which has suggested to some the probability that the tendrils of a vine had climbed up the wall and grown in through the window of the room in which they were sitting.

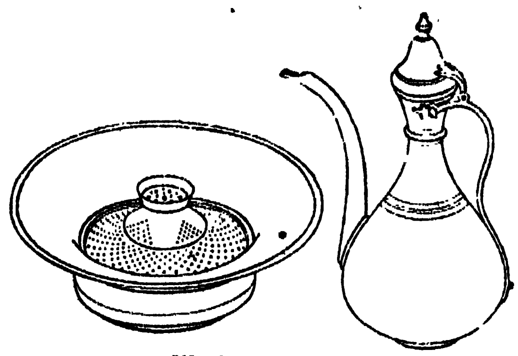
He then proceeded to explain that it was not for them to expect prosperity and enjoyment in this life. Far otherwise: he warned them that many calamities, trials, and persecutions awaited them, arising from the world's hatred of those principles which it would be their privilege and duty to promulgate. Being thus forewarned, they would know, when these things befel them, that the high purpose of God was not frustrated by the sufferings to which they were exposed, but accomplished; and that they did not come to them merely as unforeseen misfortunes and accidents.

The Redeemer had now spoken a long time, and he at length wished for some reply, to the end that he might, as his custom was, add thereupon new instructions. But perceiving the disciples around him in silence, surrendering themselves up in sorrow at the idea of that separation which he had brought so distinctly before them; he proceeded to animate and encourage them by bringing before their minds once more the great consequences which would follow his departure, especially as regarded the manifestation of the Comforter, and the high teachings, powers, and succours which he would impart. He added that although he was himself to be taken from them, it was but to the end that he might soon, in a more perfect and glorious manner, be restored to them. Much of what he said to them on this point, they appear not *then* to have understood; and perceiving this, Christ admitted that he had often spoken to them in such sayings, but the time was near at hand in which all things would be made plain to them.

The hour of his passion was drawing on now with rapid pace, and Jesus, having before his eyes a distinct perception of the depressing influence which it would exercise upon the disciples, proceeded to offer up on their behalf the earnest and beautiful prayer contained in the 17th chapter of St. John's gospel. Nor was it for them only, for in this most impressive and comprehensive address he contemplated with satisfaction his almost finished work:—"I have glorified thee on earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." He then prayed for the disciples, "those whom he had chosen out of the world;" and for the church to be formed through their teaching, and under the influences of the Holy Spirit.



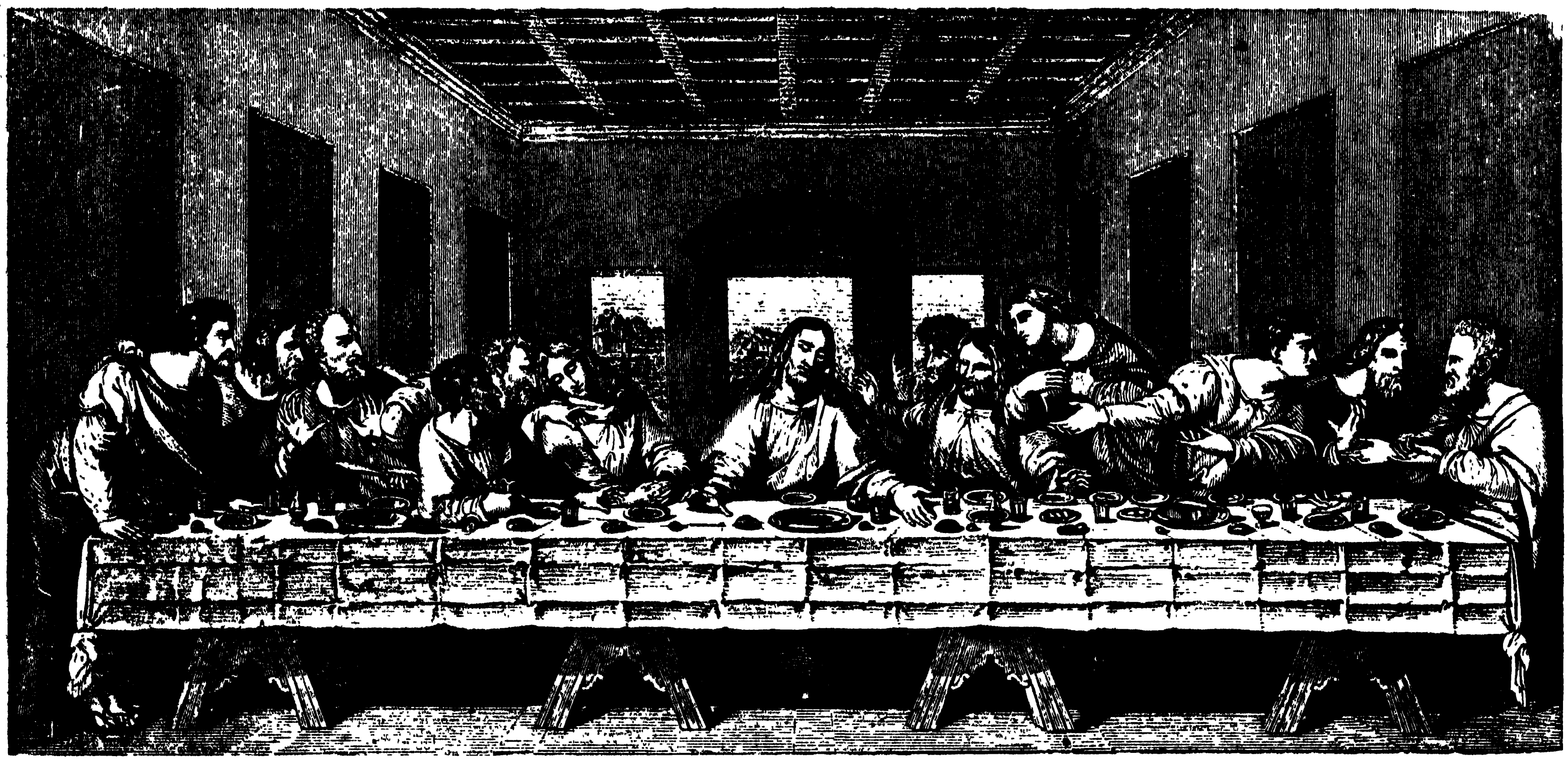
702.—Faith. (Raffaelle.)
Ffydd.



703.—Ewer and Basin.
Dwfr-lestr a Chawg.



704.—Washing Hands.
Golchi Dwylaw.



705.—The Last Supper. (Leonardo da Vinci.)
Y Swper Diweddaf.



707.—Modern Jewish Passover. (Picart.)
Pasc Iuddewig Diweddaf.



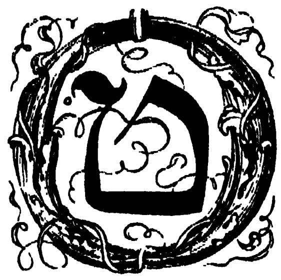
706.—The Last Supper. (Raffaelle.)
Y Swper Diweddaf.



710.—Psalm cxix. Zain.



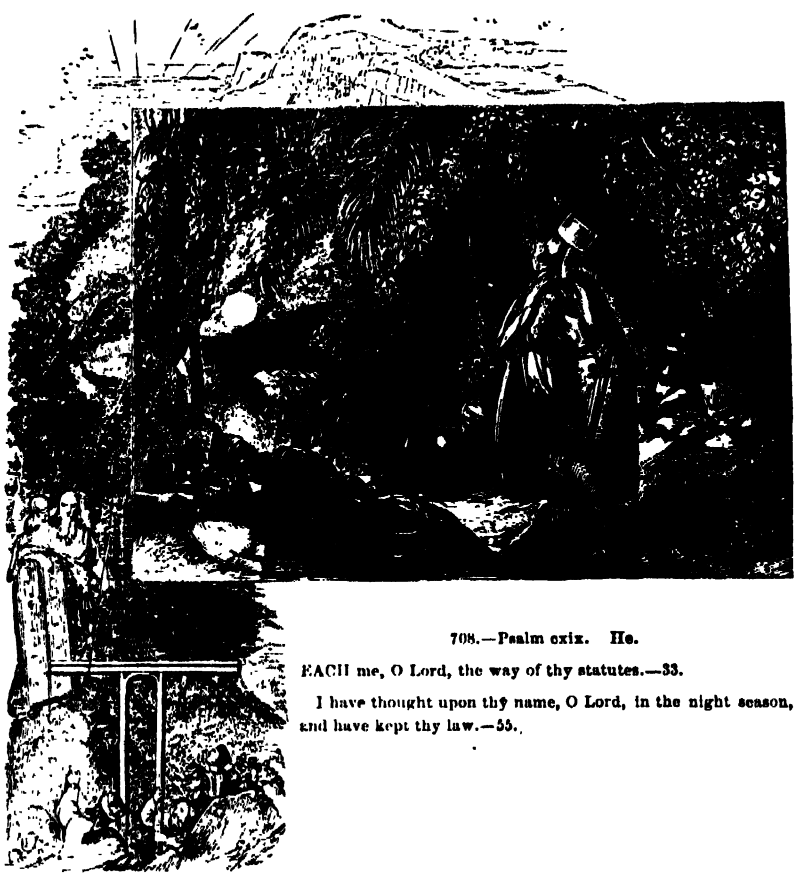
709.—Psalm cxix. Vau.



712.—Psalm cxix. Teth.



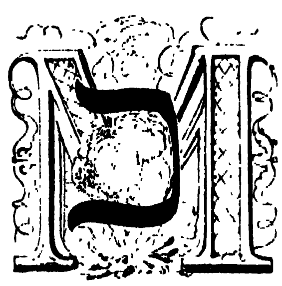
711.—Psalm cxix. Cheth.



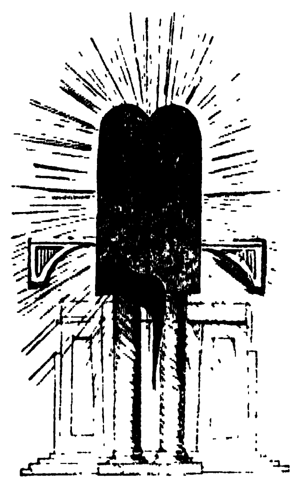
708.—Psalm cxix. He.

TEACH me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes.—33.

I have thought upon thy name, O Lord, in the night season, and have kept thy law.—55.



714.—Psalm cxix. Caph.



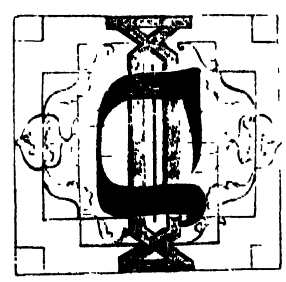
713.—Psalm cxix. Jod



720.—Psalm cxix. Pe.



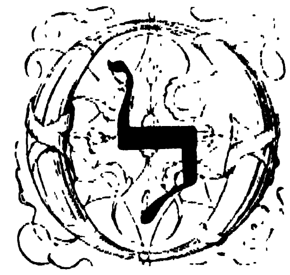
719.—Psalm cxix. Ain.



718.—Psalm cxix. Samech.



716.—Psalm cxix. Mem



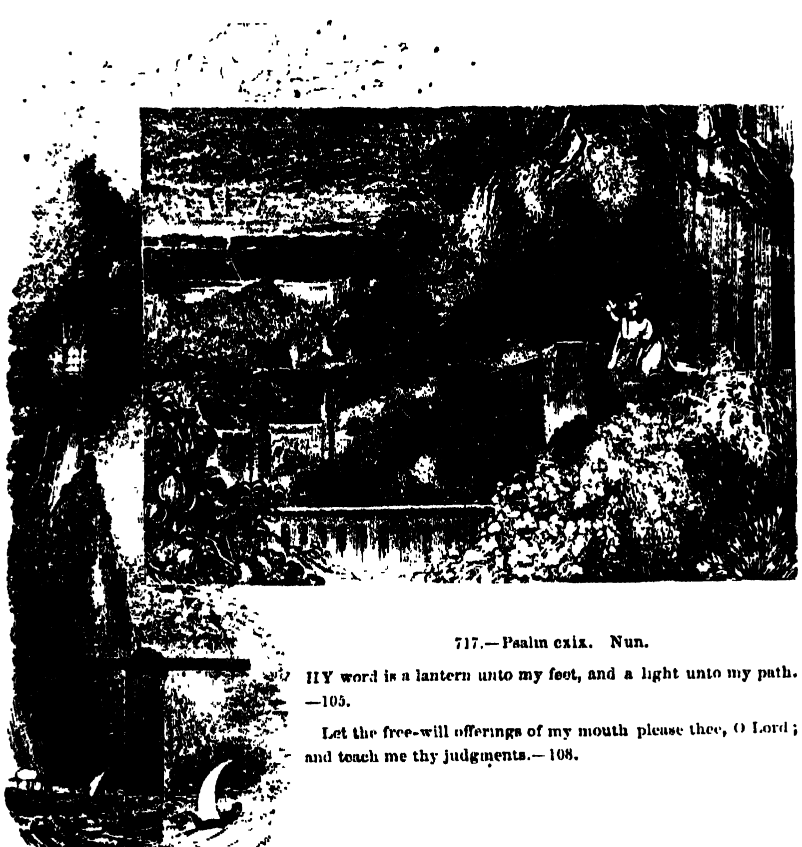
715.—Psalm cxix. Lamed.



721.—Psalm cxix. Tzaddi.



722.—Psalm cxix. Koph.



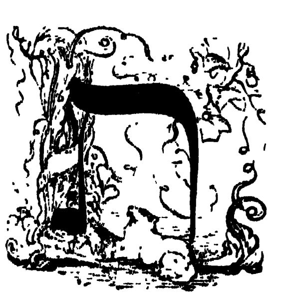
717.—Psalm cxix. Nun.

THY word is a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my path.—105.

Let the free-will offerings of my mouth please thee, O Lord; and teach me thy judgments.—108.



723.—Psalm cxix. Resh.



725.—Psalm cxix. Tau.



724.—Psalm cxix. Schin.

SUNDAY XXIX.—THE PSALMS.

THESE notices of the Psalms we should be reluctant to bring to a close without directing some attention to those more prominent characteristics of Hebrew poetry which they exemplify. This we can in this place do only cursorily and briefly, more for the purpose of indicating the leading points of the subject than of satisfying the desire for full information.

The reader who has never turned his particular attention to the subject can have little notion of the great and curious variety of opinions which have been entertained, and advocated with great zeal, respecting the rhythmical form of the Hebrew poetry in general, and of the Psalms in particular.

Many have maintained that the Hebrew poetry possesses metrical feet and versification, which they have attempted to define and restore. This has been done by various methods, in none of which has the success been by any means signal.

Many hold to a versification in the proper sense of the word, after the analogy of the Greek and Latin metres. There are ancient authorities which appear at the first view to support this conclusion. Philo describes the songs of praise of the ancient sacred poets as trimeters, and composed of strophes, and attributes to Moses a knowledge of metre. Josephus calls the versification of Moses's song of triumph at the Red Sea hexameter, and so also the farewell song of the same prophet; and he represents the Psalms of David as consisting partly of hexameter and partly of trimeter verse. Eusebius calls the Hebrew poems metrical, and their versification partly hexameter, partly trimeter and tetrameter. Jerome says the same repeatedly. It has hence been conjectured that a knowledge of the Hebrew metrical system then existed, which we have since lost; but we fail to discover in these writers any definite account or explanation of the metres which they name, and this has led to the suspicion that, in such assertions, they intended no reference to metrical feet, but only to the members of the verse. We cannot follow the various attempts which have been made to discover the metrical system of which these allusions had been supposed to denote the existence; and this is the less necessary, as it is now admitted that the best of these attempts have been no other than ingenious mistakes.

Others have believed that they found rhyme, or something resembling rhyme, in the Hebrew poetry. This supposition is less absurd than might at the first view appear; for rhyme exists in the Arabic and Persian poetry, as well as in the modern Hebrew. Instances of rhyme do most certainly occur in the Hebrew Scriptures, but the examples are not of a kind to show that rhyme constituted a law of Hebrew verse.

It has also been held that the Hebrew poetical rhythm consisted in the numbering of the syllables. The members of the verse are, indeed, sometimes equal, but for the most part unequal, and the apparent disproportion was supposed to be removed by the mode of enunciation and singing. To the same class belong those who denied the existence of a proper metre, but at the same time held that the Hebrew poetry was adapted to certain melodies, which would still imply the necessity of some kind of syllabic measure. But it has justly been remarked that, although this opinion might be maintained with respect to the Psalms and other lyrical pieces, it could not be applied to such performances as the book of Job and the Proverbs of Solomon.

In opposition to all these conclusions and conjectures, it has been strenuously maintained that the Hebrew poetry was altogether destitute of metre or feet; and this is the opinion which most of the learned Jews have themselves entertained. More than one writer has, indeed, boasted of it as a peculiar excellence of Hebrew poetry that it is not fettered and confined by a syllabic measure, and that it aims not so much at tickling the ear, as at distinctness and force of thought, which are promoted by the freedom of its movements; this is a very general opinion.

But many contend that the Hebrew poetry does possess versification, but that it is lost to us and can no longer be defined. This opinion has had illustrious advocates. Among them is Bishop Lowth, who labours to show that the Hebrew poetry must have been metrical, but that it would be vain to think of recovering the metre, since the pronunciation is lost.

This conviction that the Hebrew poetry must have had a metre, seems to proceed in a great degree upon the assumption that all poetry must have it. It is doubtless true that the example of the majority of ancient and modern languages decides in favour of this principle. But the Hebrew language is distinguished by such remarkable peculiarities, that it may well form an exception; to which we may add, that the Samaritan and Ethiopic languages have actually no syllabic metre, but only a metre of lines. From the *theory* of the poetic art, we can only derive the principle, that poetry aims to give more form and harmony to language than prose; but respecting the kind of form it prescribes no law.

Sir William Jones and others allege the example of modern Oriental languages, particularly the Arabic and Persian, in proof of the existence of a Hebrew metre. But with all the etymological affinity of the Syro-Arabian group of languages, there is very great diversity in their pronunciation, style, &c., and the Persian language is not related to the Hebrew at all; consequently it will not answer to reason from what may be true in that to what must be true in this. The serious sacred poetry of the Hebrews presents a very strong contrast, both in spirit and matter, when compared with the modern Oriental, and it may therefore possess a different and peculiar external form. The Arabic poetry has no parallelism of numbers, like the Hebrew; neither has the Hebrew rhyme, like the Arabic. The antiquity of the Arabic metre is, besides, open to question.

It is, however, urged that the Hebrew poetry was often sung, which could not have been the case unless it had metre. But to this it is solidly answered, that metre is necessary in order that poetry may be sung, only in case the melody is repeated; but if it continues along, the words, even though without metre, may be adapted to it at pleasure. Thus, with us, prose is often set to music. Whether the Hebrews had returning melodies is a question which cannot now be answered. Probably they had not. It is a reasonable conjecture that the Hebrew singing consisted only of cantillation, or a sort of declamation analogous to song; but this depends not at all upon the number or measure of the words.

Lowth and others, however, contend that traces of metre may actually be found in the Hebrew poetry. The poets, it is alleged, avail themselves of uncommon, antiquated, difficult words, forms, and phrases, and allow themselves many poetical licences, which lead to the conclusion that they were under a metrical restraint, without which these appearances cannot be explained. But it is probable that these peculiarities of the poetical language were something more than the offspring of necessity. They are sometimes evidently chosen for the sake of their antiquity, of their solemnity, and of their elegance; sometimes they seem to have sprung forth unconsciously in the fire of inspiration, in the bold flight of thought, and in the struggle with language. The only certain indication from which Lowth justly draws the conclusion that there must have been something like a rhythmical division and measure of the Hebrew poetry is the alphabetical arrangement found in a few of the Psalms and some other poetical pieces. Here we observe a regular cadence and return, somewhat resembling strophes or verses; but whether they are really strophes or verses is the question.

This view of the qualities in which the characteristics of Hebrew poetry are *not* to be sought, may be summed up in the words of Bishop Jebb, who is a great authority in this elegant branch of sacred literature:—"It is not the acrostical or regularly alphabetical commencement of lines or stanzas, for this occurs but in twelve poems of the Old Testament; it is not the introduction of foreign words, and of what the grammarians called the paragogic or redundant particles, for these licences, though frequent, are by no means universal in the poetical books of Scripture, and they are occasionally admitted in passages merely historical and prosaic; it is not the rhyming termination of lines, for no trace of this is discoverable in the alphabetical poems, the lines and stanzas of which are defined with infallible precision—and every attempt to force it on the text has been accompanied by the most licentious mutilation of Scripture; and finally, this grand characteristic is not the adoption of metre properly so called, and analogous to the metre of the heathen classics, for the efforts of the learned to discover such metre in any one poem of the Hebrews have universally failed; and while we are morally certain that, even though it were known and employed by the Jews while their language was a living one, it is quite beyond recovery in the dead and unpronounceable state of that language: there are also strong reasons for believing that, even in the most flourishing state of their literature, the Hebrew poets never used this decoration. Again, it is most certain that the proper characteristic of Hebrew poetry is not elation, grandeur, or sublimity either of thought or diction: in these qualities, indeed, a large portion of the poetical Scriptures is unrivalled; but there are also many compositions in the Old Testament, indisputably poetical which in thought and expression do not rise above the ordinary tone of just and clear conceptions, calmly yet pointedly delivered."

SUNDAY XXIX.—BIBLE HISTORY.

UPON the death of Saul and his sons access to the throne was open to David; but the course which lay before him was not without difficulties, which, however, he overcame by the energy of his character and the sincerity of his devotion.

There still remained one son of Saul, named Ishbosheth; and it became the interest of those who had enjoyed the favour of the father, to maintain themselves in their position by upholding the cause of the son. Accordingly Ishbosheth was proclaimed king through the management of his uncle Abner,—a brave and able man, who had been in command of the army in the time of Saul, and who was regarded by himself and others as the main pillar of the throne which he had set up upon the ruins of the house of Saul. The seat of Ishbosheth's kingdom was established at Mahanaim, beyond the Jordan. In this transaction the claims of the lineal heir, Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, were overlooked, partly on account of his youth and lameness, and partly because the younger son of a king was popularly considered to have at least as good a claim as the son of an elder son, who himself had not reigned.

David had acquired new credit in Israel by his recent victory over the Amalekites—those inveterate enemies of the Hebrew name; and as his claims were now well understood, numbers of influential persons joined him at Ziklag every day. David himself was now thirty years of age; handsome, mighty in arms, and accomplished beyond most men in the arts which belonged to peace. Adversity had given maturity to his age, and the energy of his character derived added force from the sincerity of his faith. Having consulted the Lord, as was his wise custom, in this critical condition of affairs, he advanced, so soon as the days of public mourning for Saul had expired, at the head of his brave troop, now increased to a small army, towards Hebron, the principal city in his own tribe of Judah. He was well received in that important place; and the news of his arrival having rapidly spread, all the influential men of the tribe soon gathered round him there, and acknowledged him as their king, and bound themselves to him by the then usual forms of allegiance.

Notwithstanding that all the other tribes had acknowledged the son of Saul, Abner, who held the reins of power in the name of the imbecile Ishbosheth, could not endure that there should be another king in Judah, and resolved upon war. He, therefore, advanced at the head of an army towards Judah, but was met at Gibeon by Joab, who was in command of the forces of David. He and his brothers Abishai and the swift-footed Asahel were nephews of David, being sons of his sister Zeruiah. The force under Joab was less numerous than that of Abner, but was composed of tried soldiers, full of ardour and of hope. A number of single combats preceded and brought on the general action, as was often the case in ancient time, and is still the practice among the Arabian tribes. Upon the defiance of Abner, six of the most valiant men of each army combated each other between the two main bodies, with such equal skill and fury, that they were all left dead upon the ground. The battle which followed was most bloody, but in the end Abner was beaten, and those of his men who survived took to flight. Abner himself was pursued by Asahel, "who was light of foot as a wild roe." Annoyed at this inveterate pursuit, and being yet unwilling to harm the youth, and thus put a blood-feud between himself and Joab, Abner besought Asahel to desist; but as he still followed with redoubled speed, he gave him a backward thrust with the pointed heel of his spear, and left him wallowing in blood on the road.

The victors still allowed no repose to the vanquished. The sun had already set behind the hills, when Abner, finding Joab and the elite of his army close upon his rear, turned round abruptly and implored him to desist from this carnage upon his brethren. Joab was struck by this remonstrance, and withdrew his men from the pursuit. The result of this action did not, however, put an end to the war between parties whose interests were so much opposed. It was kept up during all the reign of Ishbosheth, but with results generally favourable to David, who became stronger every day, while the house of Saul daily became more weak. The whole strength of that house lay in the prudence and valour of Abner, whose influence and abilities kept the people in their allegiance. Unfortunately for Ishbosheth, he took just offence at some part of Abner's conduct, and for once in his life ventured to remonstrate with him in language becoming a man of spirit. To such language the haughty Abner was altogether unaccustomed; he answered resentfully, and vowed not to forgive it, but to abandon a cause in which his great services met such reward. And he kept his word. From that hour he used all his influence to bring over all the tribes to the interest of David; and as soon as he had, by sounding some chief persons, assured himself of the feasibility of the undertaking, he visited the king at Hebron, where he was well received, and his offered services frankly accepted. David even hinted an intention to make him captain of the host in the united kingdom, which, however politic, looks like an injustice to Joab, who now held that office in the separate kingdom of Judah. But David doubtless considered that the possession of this office by the chief man of the house of Saul would tend much to conciliate the tribes, and keep them firm in their allegiance to him. Joab was absent from Hebron when this visit took place, and it is not unlikely that Abner, knowing the feud between them, timed his visit with reference to that circumstance. Joab, however, unhappily for him, returned to Hebron when he had just taken his departure, and, on learning what had occurred, he hastened to the king, and reproached him for his easiness in very strong and unbecoming language, affirming that he had given Abner an advantage over him, of which he would not neglect to avail himself, to the detriment of his kingdom. He probably believed this; but the remembrance of his brother, and the dread of Abner as a rival in interest with David, probably more actively influenced the course which was taken by him. He immediately dispatched messengers after Abner, to invite him back in the king's name. On his return, Joab met him at the gate, and drew him aside as if to speak with him in secret, and when he had engaged his attention, he suddenly drew his dagger, and smote him under the fifth rib, and slew him "for the blood of Asahel, his brother."

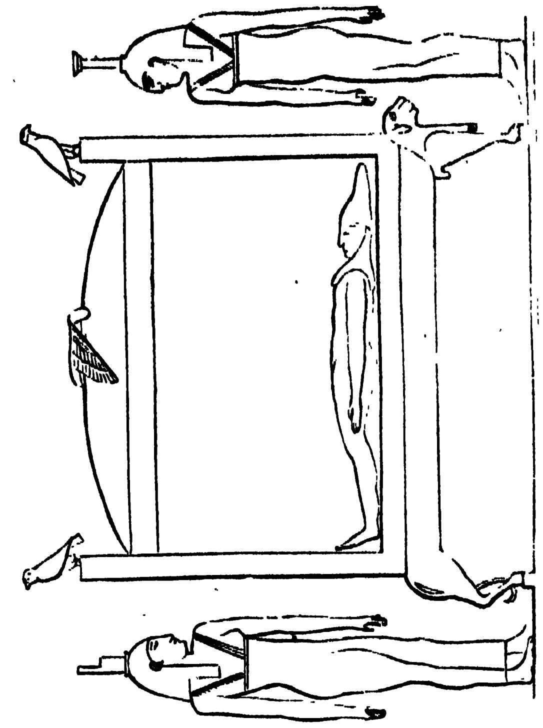
David was greatly shocked at this transaction. He knew that it might be imputed to him, especially as the power of Joab, his popularity, and his influence with the troops, preserved him from punishment. The measures which he took were well calculated to remove, and did remove, any such impression. He publicly disavowed the act, and fixed it upon the head of Joab; he ordered a general and public act of mourning, and a magnificent funeral for the murdered prince, and himself followed the bier in person. The tears which the king shed over the grave, the eloquent lamentation which he poured forth, and his abstinence from food all that day, satisfied the people of his sincerity. It is added that they were pleased: "as whatever the king did pleased all the people."

Ishbosheth became helpless when deprived of Abner; and there was every prospect that in a short time his kingdom would have fallen to pieces of its own accord. This was perceived by his own courtiers, who became anxious to provide for themselves. Two of them, officers of the guard, entered his chamber, while he enjoyed the customary afternoon sleep, and took off his head, which they placed in a bag, and hastened away to lay it at the feet of David. They greatly misunderstood the character of the man. He was shocked beyond measure at this horrid deed; and, instead of bestowing on the assassins the rewards and favours which they expected, he said—"As the Lord liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity, when one told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, thinking to have brought good tidings, I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, who thought that I would have given him a reward for his tidings. How much more when wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed? Shall I not, therefore, now require his blood at your hands, and take you away from the earth?" He accordingly commanded them to be slain, and, to manifest his detestation of their regicide, he directed their hands and feet to be cut off, and hanged up over the pool in Hebron. The head of Ishbosheth was buried with due reverence in the sepulchre of Abner.

It appears that no one thought of setting up a successor to Ishbosheth, and a rival to David in the throne of Israel. On the contrary, his claims, enhanced by his prosperous government of the kingdom of Judah, were generally acknowledged; and his military reputation was deemed, both by friends and foes, the highest in Israel. The elders of the tribes, therefore, repaired to Hebron, and invited him to take the government of the whole nation, assigning as a reason, "When Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel." David affected no reluctance to accede to the proposal. "He made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord;" by which it may appear that they



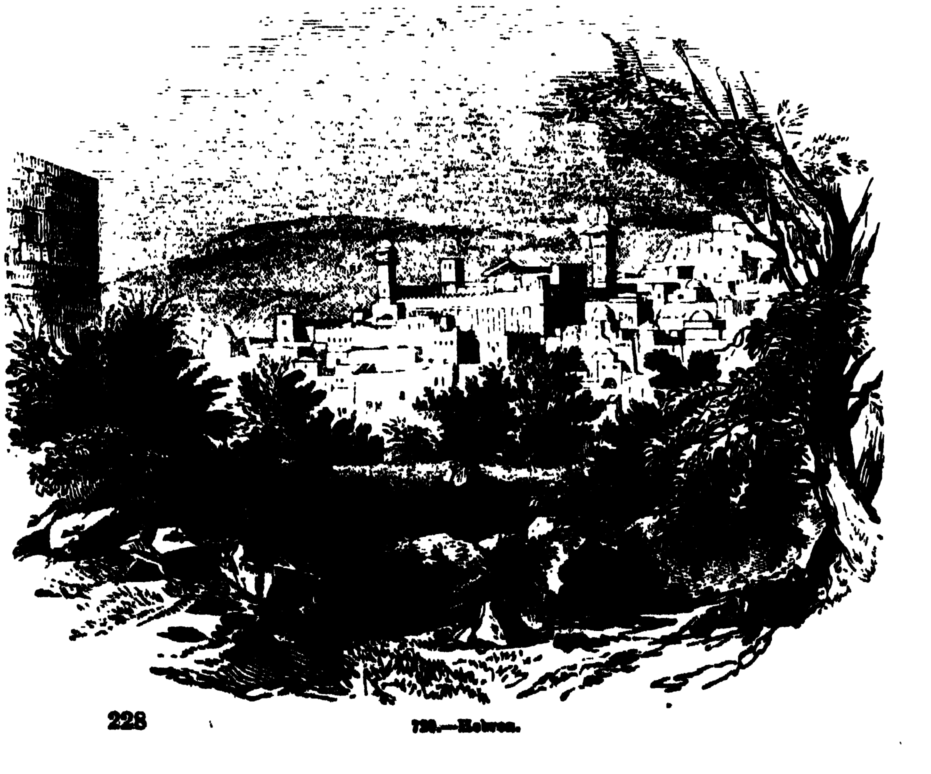
726.—David and the Amalekite. (Andrea del Sarto.)—2 Sam. i.
Dafydd a'r Amaleciad.



727.—Bier. (From an Egyptian Bas-relief at Thebes.)
Elor. ([illegible] Aiphtaidd yn Thebes.)



728.—Sackcloth.
Sachliain.



729.—Hebron.



730.—Corner Seat of Honour.
Congl Gadair Anrhydedd.



732.—Elders of Israel offering David the Kingdom. (Bernardo Strozza.)
Henuriaid Israel yn cynnyg y Frenhiniaeth i Dafydd.



733.—Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. (Cassas.)
Jerusalem o Fynydd yr Olewydd.



731.—David with the Head of Goliath. (Guido.)
Dafydd gyda Phen Goliath.



734.—David dancing before the Ark. (Domenichino.)
Dafydd yn dawnsio ger bron yr Arch.

mutually agreed to adhere to the schedule of reciprocal obligations which appears to have been drawn up by Samuel (1 Sam. x. 25), and which in our days would be called a constitution. He was then anointed king over all the tribes, after a separate reign over Judah of seven years and six months, in Hebron, B.C. 1048.

The first exploit of David after his second coronation was performed against the Jebusites, who still continued to occupy Jerusalem, the fortifications of which they seem to have recently improved with much care. So confident, indeed, were they, more especially in the defences of Mount Zion, that, when summoned to surrender, they boasted that their lame and blind were alone sufficient to repel the most vigorous assault the Israelites could make upon it. But the skill and resolution of David, aided by the furious valour of Joab, soon convinced the Jebusites that fortifications had become less formidable to the Israelites than of old they had been. Incensed by their taunts, the king stimulated his men by example and reward, and they slackened not their exertions till the fortress was reduced. Jerusalem, so venerable, under the name of Salem, in its early history and associations, and which had so long resisted the attempts of the Israelites to gain possession of it, having thus fallen into the hands of David, he resolved to make it the metropolis of the now united kingdom. He added to the buildings of the citadel, which he also adorned in a style suited to the purpose he contemplated; and, having enclosed the whole within walls so as to separate it from the lower town, he conferred upon this quarter of his new capital the distinction of his own name; whence it is often subsequently mentioned as "the city of David," although that term is sometimes in Scripture applied to the whole metropolis.

Being now well established in his kingdom, and his reputation having been much increased by the taking of Jerusalem, the neighbouring princes, whose interests were not adverse to those of Israel, hastened to seek his friendship. Among them was Hiram, the king of Tyre, who sent an embassy to congratulate him on his accession; and this proved the foundation of an alliance of considerable duration, and which was equally beneficial to the dominions of both the monarchs; for the Tyrians, being addicted to commerce, were able to put within the reach of the Israelites a large number of useful commodities, in exchange for their corn, wine, and oil, which the former wanted. The Phœnicians were also skilled in the arts, particularly in architecture, and David requested and obtained the assistance of some of King Hiram's architects for building himself a palace upon Mount Zion.

About this time the Philistines, jealous at seeing so formidable a power consolidated on their border, invaded the land of Israel with a very powerful army. On this David threw himself into one of his strongholds, whence he hoped to check their further advance till he should have collected a sufficient force to drive them from the country. But having received the Divine assurance of complete success, he attacked the enemy, and succeeded in totally defeating them. The Philistines were, however, in earnest, and soon appeared again in the field, and renewed the war; but the king of Israel was again victorious over them, and the present defeat was even more complete than the former.

On his triumphant return to his capital, after having obtained two such victories over the most formidable and warlike enemies of Israel, the king, full of duty and gratitude to the Lord, from whom he had received such abundant blessings, resolved to bring to Jerusalem the ark of God, which had so long remained in obscurity at Kirjath-jearim. He assembled for the occasion thirty thousand of the chief men of Israel, who, with the priests and Levites, walked in procession before the ark, "playing on all manner of musical instruments." The ark was placed on a new car drawn by oxen, which was a grievous irregularity, as the law required that it should be borne upon the shoulders of the Levites. This mistake was the occasion of the disaster which followed. The ark being much shaken in one part of the road, near the threshing-floor of Nachon, Uzzah, one of the sons of Abinadab (in whose custody it had been), put forth his hand to prevent it from falling, but had no sooner touched it than he fell dead to the ground. By this severe lesson the Israelites were taught that even good intentions would not be held to excuse any irreverent or unlawful act in the service of God; for Uzzah was not a priest or a Levite, who alone were privileged to touch the sacred chest. Astonished at this severe and unexpected stroke, the king feared to take the ark any farther, but deposited it in the house of Obed-edom, a Levite, which was near at hand, and the magnificent assembly dispersed in disappointment and concern. In three months, however, David having heard that signal blessings had fallen on Obed-edom since the ark had been in his charge, was encouraged to resume his design of bringing it to Jerusalem. Instructed by the fate of Uzzah, and having learnt that only Levites of the family of Kohath might lawfully carry the ark, he committed it to their care, and they brought it, bearing it upon their shoulders, safely to Jerusalem, where it was deposited in a magnificent tent which had been prepared for it in that city, for the original tabernacle was still at Gibeon. The particulars of this solemnity afford an interesting example of the mode in which the ancient Hebrews celebrated a religious festival. The people who marched before the ark gave vent to their joy by dancing, music, and song, the king himself setting the example by dancing before the ark, playing upon his renowned harp. Then, when the ark had been deposited in its place, followed abundant sacrifices, which afforded the means of additional enjoyment to a large multitude; for, "as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of Hosts. And he dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. So all the people departed, every one to his house."

When David beheld the magnificence of the palace which King Hiram's builders had erected for him, a compunctious thought arose within him: "See, now," he said to the prophet Nathan, "I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains." Discovering by this the current of the king's thoughts, the prophet encouraged him to do all that was "in his heart." In this he was too hasty; for he speedily received an intimation requiring him to inform David that seeing he had been constantly engaged in war and had shed much human blood, it was not the Lord's pleasure that he should build a temple to His honour; but that the work and honour should be reserved for the peaceful reign of his son, who, although as yet unborn, was to be his successor on the throne. The design itself was, however, highly approved; and seeing that in forming it the grateful king had no other object than the Divine glory, he was honoured with much commendation, and with a promise of the perpetuity of his dynasty in Israel. "I took thee from the sheep-cote," said the Divine message, "to be ruler over my people Israel: and I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like the names of the great men that are upon the earth. . . . And thy house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever." None could be more sensible than David of the high value of such a promise. He "went in and sat before the Lord," doubtless in that posture between kneeling and sitting which in the East is still a posture of respect; and thus poured out the full expression of the gratitude which that promise had inspired.

From that day forward David spared no cost or labour in providing materials for the great building, designed to be of wonderful magnificence, which he was not himself allowed to erect. Even the plan of the building, with the new arrangements of sacerdotal ministrations, and great treasures to defray the expense, were prepared by him; so that to him belongs a very large measure—perhaps the largest measure—of the credit which the completed work reflected upon its founder.

Soon after this David renewed the war with the Philistines, and succeeded in subduing them in various engagements. He was equally successful in an expedition against the Moabites, whom he made tributary to his crown. Pursuing his career of success, David at length pushed his frontier to the Euphrates by subduing Hadadezer, king of Zobah, whose proper dominion was a territory to the north-east of Canaan, but who had brought under his rule many small states which seem to have extended to that river, and which now came under the hand of his conqueror. All the cities which David took he appears to have garrisoned with his own troops, and levied large contributions on the inhabitants. Some of the chariots which fell into his hands, the king reserved for his own use, as a piece of state: but destroyed the greater number, out of deference to the law which forbade the king of Israel "to multiply horses unto himself."

These successes were very acceptable to some princes, who had been distressed by Hadadezer. One of them, Toi, king of Hamath, sent his own son Joram with many valuable presents to David, to congratulate him on his victories, "and to bless him."

The most memorable of the wars in which David engaged, and the most important in its consequences, was that with the Ammonites—which was not only the most remarkable in itself, but was attended by some very important circumstances.

SUNDAY XXIX.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

NOT unworthy of remark are the words of Tholuck, who, in reference to this striking address, states: "Before the happy Spener left the world, he caused this address to be read to him three times. 'In which we are to suppose,' says his biographer, 'that he loved this chapter with a peculiar affection, though he was never willing to preach on it, with the protestation that he did not understand it, and that a correct understanding of the same transcended the measure of faith which the Lord is accustomed to communicate to his followers in their pilgrimage.'"

Our Lord at length went forth from the house, and proceeded across the valley of the Kidron to a garden near the foot of the Mount of Olives. The garden was called Gethsemane, which name it derived from the oil-presses which were or had been there. Arrived in this place, Jesus desired the apostles to remain, while he himself retired to some distance, attended only by his favoured disciples, Peter, James, and John. Then "he began to be sorrowful and very heavy;" and turning to his disciples, who now witnessed the deep distress of him whom they had seen glorified on the Mount of Transfiguration, he declared to them his anguish, and desired them to tarry there in watchfulness and prayer, while he withdrew to a more retired part of the garden, about a stone's throw distance from them. Here he underwent that terrible and mysterious agony of soul which made him cry, "O, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" but he humbly added, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." He then rose and went over to the three disciples, and found them all asleep. He chid them gently, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" but kindly admitted that in them the spirit indeed was willing, though the flesh was weak. He then returned to the place he had quitted, and again poured out the anguish of his soul before God:—"O, my Father, if this cup may not pass from me without my drinking it, thy will be done." Returning to his disciples, he found them again asleep; and, after rousing them, went back again to the former place. This time his agony became more intense, and his prayer more fervent; so dreadful were his sufferings, that, "as he prayed, his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground," although he was then in the open air, and in the cool of the night. Then, in that awful moment, there appeared an angel from heaven standing near him in a visible form, strengthening him by that sensible token of the Father's favour, and suggesting such holy consolations as were suitable to animate his soul in such a struggle.

Rising after this dreadful mental conflict, Jesus repaired once more to his disciples, and found them again "sleeping for sorrow." Knowing that his enemies had already entered the garden, he said, "Sleep on now and take your rest; behold, the hour is come, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." *This* roused them effectually: but they had scarcely risen to their feet when a band of armed men appeared with lanterns and torches, sent by the Sanhedrim to apprehend him. They were led on by Judas, who was well acquainted with this favourite resort of his master, and had given them the token that the man whom they should see him kiss was the one they were to apprehend. Accordingly the traitor went up straight to Jesus, saying, "Hail, master!" and kissed him. Jesus said, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" and, immediately advancing to the armed men, asked them, "Whom seek ye?" With that misgiving which accompanies an evil conscience, associated in their case with a vague impression of the dignity of the person they came to seize, they answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." He answered, "I AM HE;" on which the Divinity flashed through their darkened consciences, which had been already roused, and they fell to the ground. The abettors, meanwhile, as is customary in such cases, seeing that those to whom the affair was properly entrusted did not immediately press forward, seem themselves to have laid hands upon the Redeemer. Enraged at this, the ever ardent Peter drew his sword, and the stroke which he gave with it cut off the right ear of one of the most forward of the number, a servant of the high-priest, named Malchus. On this Jesus commanded him to sheath his sword, saying, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" He then put forth his hand and healed the wound of his bitterest assailant, thus affording a splendid example of that return of good for evil which he so constantly enjoined.

When the immediate impression upon the minds of the band by the Divinity in Jesus had passed away, and when they had once more succeeded in silencing the voice of conscience, they seized the Saviour, and led him back to the city, to the house of the high-priest, in which a sufficient number of the Sanhedrim had already assembled for the occasion. This was illegal, as the law then in operation is known to have enjoined that all judicial proceedings before that body should take place in the day-time, and in the usual hall of assembly.

When the apostles saw that their Lord was led away by his enemies, they dispersed in different directions, as Christ had foretold, apprehensive of being involved in his peril. Peter and John, however, followed at a distance, and, after a brief interval, the latter, who was personally known at the house of the high-priest, applied for admittance, and was allowed by the porteress to enter. Knowing that Peter was outside, John then sought admission for him, and obtained it. The woman who kept the gate, seeing him with John, concluded that he also was a disciple of Christ, and made a remark to that effect. She seems to have done so without any particular meaning or ill intention, but Peter, being thoroughly alarmed, denied the charge with some vehemence. On entering the court they found themselves in front of the public-room, or hall of audience, open in front, where sat the Sanhedrim, before which Jesus then stood. The apostles remained in the court, and joined the party of officers of the high-priest and others, who were gathered round a fire which they had kindled in the open air; for although at the time of the Passover the days were warm in Judea, the nights were very chill. They were thus enabled to become witnesses of the transactions which then took place.

The high-priest at first attempted to draw from Christ such admissions as would afford easy ground for proceedings against him. But Jesus, knowing that the high-priest had predetermined to condemn him, and that his answers were only sought as a ground and support to that determination, appealed to his public teachings, and declined to give any specific response to an examination so invidious.

Failing in the design of condemning him from his own mouth, false witnesses were produced against him, whose testimony was, however, found to be of little importance, till two of them avowed that they heard him say that he was able to overthrow the temple of God, and in three days rear it up again. This was, according to existing views, an accusation of blasphemy against God, conformably with which the religious tribunals of the Jews could lawfully condemn him. It was, therefore, eagerly taken hold of, and he was asked if he admitted this charge. He was silent. The high-priest then asked him plainly whether he was actually the Messiah. Christ, who knew his disposition, answered, "If I should tell you, you would not believe me." But on being pressed for a definite answer, "Art thou then the Messiah?" he answered, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man in his glory at the right hand of God." They were incapable of understanding the expression of the Divine consciousness which was contained in this answer, but they understood it as conveying the admission which they sought; and they, therefore, rent their clothes as at some horrid blasphemy, and, declaring that no further evidence was required, they hastened to procure his final condemnation from the Roman governor, by whom alone it could be granted.

While these transactions were taking place, Peter, perceiving that he began to be eyed with suspicion by the party around the fire, withdrew towards the gate. Here he was again charged by the porteress as being "one of them;" which he again peremptorily denied, and then went back to the group around the fire. Here he was soon again accused of being one of the followers of Christ. One, a relative of Malchus, whose ear Peter had cut off, began to recollect that he had seen him in the garden; another alleged his Galilean dialect as a proof of the fact. The fear of man prevailed. Peter again most solemnly denied that he knew "the man of whom they spoke," and while he was confirming this protestation with many oaths, the crowing of the cock rang through the court and struck him dumb. At the same moment Jesus turned and looked upon Peter. That sorrowful look, so full of tender reproach, smote the apostle to the soul. He went out, and wept bitterly.

After he had been condemned by the high-priest, Jesus was exposed to the insults and mal-treatment of the servants and officers while waiting till the morning should be far enough advanced to take him before the Roman governor. He was buffeted and spit upon; and they even went so far as to blindfold him, and then to smite him, asking derisively, Prophesy who is it that smote thee? "All which injuries might have been greater than his patience," remarks Jeremy Taylor, "had his patience been less than infinite."



735.—Persecution of the Disciples.—John xvi.
Erledigaeth y Disgyblion.



736.—Disciples weeping.—John xvi.
Y Disgyblion yn wylo.



738.—Peter denying Christ. (Poussin.)
Petr yn gwadu Crist.



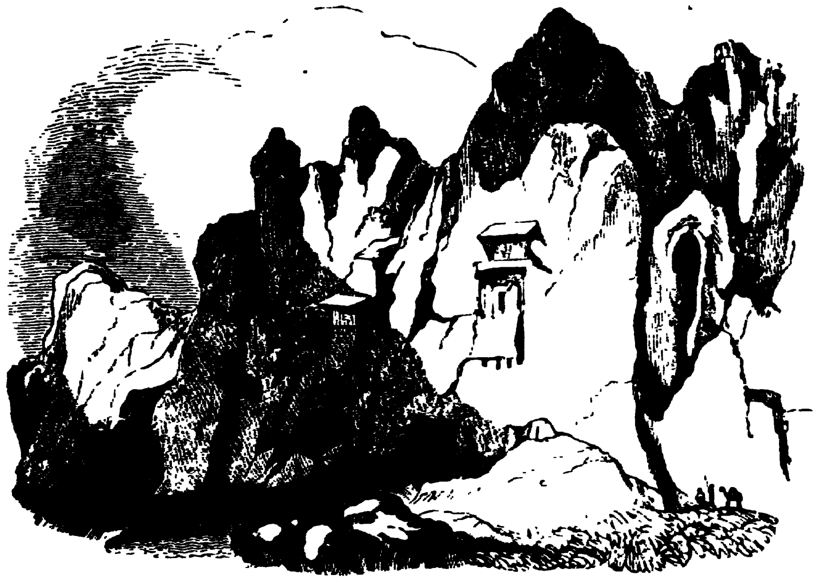
739.—Christ rejected.
Crist yn cael ei wrthod.



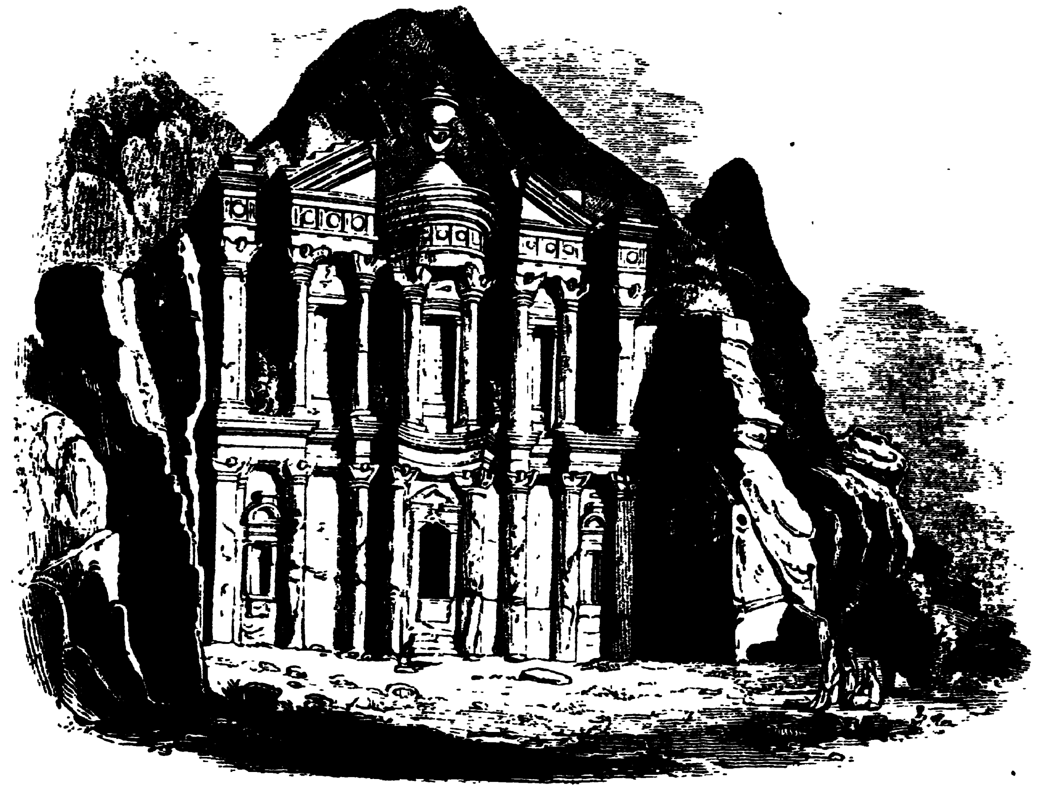
737.—Christ in the Garden.
Crist yn yr Ardd.



740.—Christ crowned with Thorns.
Coroni Crist â Drain.



742.—Mountain of Sepulchres at Nakshi Rustam.
Mynydd y Beddrodau yn Nakshi Rustam.



744.—Tomb at Petra. (From Laborde.)
Beddrod yn Petra. (O Laborde.)



743.—Sepulchral Monuments near Sidon.
Cofadeiliau Beddrodol yn agos i Sidon.



741.—Group of Scythian Barrows.
Twr o Garneddau Ysgythiaidd.

SUNDAY XXX.—THE PROPHET EZEKIEL.

AT the latter part of the thirty-second chapter of Ezekiel, from the seventeenth verse to the end, we find a very remarkable prophetical poem: the general object is to denounce upon "the multitude of Egypt" the same lot that had befallen other nations which came in contact with the Babylonians. In the prophetical imagery the Egyptians are described as being "brought down to the grave" in company with these other nations; and the characters of the graves, in which the dead of these different nations reposed, are there indicated with specific marks of distinction, which afford a curious and interesting subject of antiquarian investigation. The poem is divided by the sense into several strophes, in the first of which Egypt is addressed:

> "Come down from the pleasant waters [of the Nile],
> And be thou laid with the uncircumcised."

These are then described, and first

> "—— Assyria and all her company,
> Whose graves are set in the sides of the pit,
> And her company is round about her in the grave."

This and other similar expressions constantly occurring in Scripture suggest an idea of graves which would not occur among a people who burned the dead, like the Romans formerly, or the Hindoos at the present day; nor among a people who buried in separate graves, as is the custom among ourselves. The grave is described as populous, and the inmates lie "in the sides of the pit," in company together. These frequently recurring images and expressions obviously apply to and are illustrated by the ancient sepulchral caverns, "pits," or "holes," in the sides of which recesses were formed to receive the bodies of the dead. This was the general mode of sepulture among ancient nations; and hence the description of the Assyrian graves does not offer images unfamiliar to the reader of Scripture, or, indeed, materially different from those which are in the same chapter applied to some other nations. There are, however, shades of difference which may be detected by careful inquiry; for although many nations had this same general mode of disposing of the dead, their particular practices were often distinctive and important.

In regard to the Assyrian sepulchres, nothing had been produced in illustration of the text till the Editor of the Pictorial Bible brought the results of his actual observations to bear upon it. The sepulchral sites, examined by him upon the banks of the Tigris—the river of Assyria—are said to contain urns of various forms, lined with bitumen, and sometimes glazed, containing bones and dust. They are found in almost every situation—in mounds of ruins, in the cliffs of rivers, and even in the thick walls of ancient towns and fortifications. In some places where the stream has cut down the bank perpendicularly, its steep face presents multitudes of urns, from the summit to the water's edge, in every variety of form and size, arranged sometimes regularly, and sometimes not; connected with lines of brickwork, and suggesting that these urns were arranged in the niches, or placed upon ledges in cellars formed of kiln-dried brick investing an interior mass of sun-dried material; but probably in caverns in the upper country, which is more stony and mountainous. A striking passage from the Desatir is also produced in illustration of these practices, and of the present text: "The usage of the Fersendajians regarding the dead was this: after the soul had left the body, they washed the body in pure water, and dressed it in clean and perfumed vestments; they then put it in a vase of aqua-fortis, and when the body was dissolved, carried the liquid far from the city, and poured it out; or else they burned it in the fire, after attiring it, as hath been said; or they made a dome, *and formed a deep pit within it*, which they built and lined with stone, brick, and mortar, *and on its sides* (or 'edges') *niches were constructed and platforms erected, on which the dead were deposited.*"

Then follows a similar set of expressions with reference to Elam or Persia, where the custom of sepulture seems to have been the same as among the Assyrians. Indeed, the above extract from the Desatir is primarily applicable to them, although it has been quoted in connexion with the actual sepulchres of Assyria. The Persians, however, had also sepulchres for their mighty dead, hewn in the living rock, like the Jews themselves, and other natives of Western Asia; and to these, certainly, the expressions of Ezekiel may with equal force and propriety be applied. Some very curious examples of these ancient sepulchres still remain in Persia; and of these the most remarkable is "the mountain of sepulchres" at Nakshi-Rustam, which are supposed to be of a date not long posterior to the time of Ezekiel. They are supposed to be sepulchres of the kings of Persia, including some of the monarchs named in Scripture; and from Isa. xxii. 16, it appears that the Jews were also partial to such "sepulchres on high, graven in the rock," as this representation exhibits. Some idea of the interior arrangements of such sepulchres may be obtained from the view of the interior of the sepulchres represented in Figs. 587 and 588.

The next allusion is to Meshech and Tubal, supposed to be the nations lying between and to the north of the Euxine and Caspian seas. Here the phrases are new and distinctive:

> "There is Meshech, Tubal, and all her multitude,
> The graves are round about her:
> And these lie down with the mighty,
> That are fallen of old time,
> That are gone down to the pit with their weapons of war,
> And have laid their swords under their heads."

Here the dead are not "round about the sides of the pit;" but the graves themselves are dispersed round about; and are similar to those in which the mighty ones, even then ancient, were laid with their weapons of war. This seems to apply with remarkable clearness to the burial in barrows, which is well known to have in ancient times prevailed throughout Europe, and which, whenever opened, are found to contain bodies, together with "the weapons of war" which were buried with them. These barrows are less common in Asia than in Europe; and the present writer has always regarded it as a remarkable fact that the only part of Asia in which he ever saw several of them together at the same time was in the countries bordering on the Caucasus, which the prophet appears to have had in view. Here they are often seen in the midst of extensive plains, where no natural hills exist, but for which, and for the perfect regularity of their form, these artificial mounds might be supposed natural, for they are often large and high, and have in some cases become in the course of ages overgrown with wood. The engraving (Fig. 741) will give a correct notion of such sepulchres.

The prophet next turns to Edom; but there is nothing very distinctive in the terms which are employed. The Edomites seem to have had the same modes of sepulture in caverns which existed among the Hebrews themselves. The innumerable tombs excavated in the cliffs of the valley in which Petra, the metropolis of Edom, was enclosed, may have been for the most part as old as the time of Ezekiel, although the rich and curiously sculptured façades with which many of them are ornamented must be of later date. Several specimens of these have been given in the course of the present work, and another is now added. They differ merely in the style of sculpture in the façades, from the similarly ornamented tombs in Palestine, Persia, and Asia Minor. But the vast number which are here crowded together, is without example in any other place. They not only occupy the front of the entire mountain by which the valley is encompassed, but the numerous ravines and recesses which radiate in all parts from this enclosed area. They exist too in great numbers in the precipitous rocks which shoot out from the principal mountains into the southern, and still more into the northern, part of the site, and they are seen all along the approaches to the place. It is stated that were these excavations, instead of following all the sinuosities of the mountain and its numerous gorges, ranged in regular order, like the houses of a well-built city, they would probably form a street of not less than five or six miles in length.

The Sidonians, who are next mentioned by the prophet, by which term the Phœnicians generally may be understood, inhabited a plain, and therefore had not cliff sepulchres. They had, however, subterraneous sepulchral chambers, with recesses in the sides, in which the dead were deposited; and persons of consideration appear to have been laid in stone coffins, of which many specimens in fine marble still exist. Sometimes, instead of niches, the sepulchral chambers have benches, on which the coffins appear to have been laid. The sites of these sepulchres are marked above ground by stone chests, not unlike tombs, of the forms shown in the engraving. Many of these are met with on the road between Beirout and Sidon, some entire, others broken, and many with their covers thrown off or turned aside, in the search for hid treasure which forms a passion among the Orientals. They are of an oblong form, and some of the largest are two yards and a half in length.

SUNDAY XXX.—BIBLE HISTORY.

AS AHASH, the king of that country, had shown friendship to David in his troubles, when he died the Hebrew monarch sent an embassy to condole with the new king, Hanun, on the death of his father, and to compliment him on his own accession. But the weak young man allowed himself to be persuaded that the king of Israel had some sinister designs in this act of apparent friendship. He therefore treated the embassy with indignity and insult. He directed the robes of the venerable and distinguished persons who composed it to be cut short around them, and one half of their beards to be shaven off—than which nothing could be more insulting to an Oriental—and in that shameful condition sent them back to their own country. Hearing of their deplorable state, David sent to direct them to stay at Jericho till the growth of their beards enabled them to appear with decency at court. He was fired at the indignity offered to himself in the person of his ambassadors, and sent a considerable force into the country under the command of Joab. Hanun was well aware of what he had to expect, and on his part had not been idle. He formed alliances with different Syrian tribes, who sent large contingents to his assistance. Joab, with his usual judgment, resolved, if possible, to prevent their junction; and with this view he divided his force—himself leading the main body to intercept the auxiliaries, while the remainder, under his brother Abishai, kept the Ammonites in check. Both movements were completely successful. The Syrians were driven back to their own country: this defeat engaged the Syrians to further action, and another powerful army was soon collected, containing auxiliaries even from beyond the Euphrates, which, under the command of Shobach, the general of Hadadezer king of Zobah, advanced against the Israelites. This time David took the field in person, and with his usual success. The armies met near the city of Helam, beyond the Jordan, and in the action which ensued the Syrians were overthrown, and forced to fly in great confusion, leaving forty thousand of their men dead upon the field. This great disaster cured the Syrians of all wish to assist the Ammonites, who were now left to their own resources. David then committed the conduct of the war to Joab, and returned to his capital. His general defeated the Ammonites in different engagements, and at length proceeded to invest Rabbah, their metropolis. This was an uncommonly strong place, and for two years withstood the utmost efforts of the Hebrew army.

It was during this period that David formed the unhappy intimacy with Bathsheba, which led him into great crimes, involved him in many troubles, and has left an ineradicable blot upon his name. The story is well known. The substance of it is, that having seen this beautiful woman, and becoming attached to her, he sent for her husband Uriah, a brave and faithful officer who was with the army before Rabbah, in the hope of making his presence instrumental in concealing the consequences of the adulterous intercourse which had taken place between himself and Bathsheba. Failing in this design, through the austere virtue of Uriah, who refused himself the solace of his own house while the army remained in the field, David knew that Bathsheba would ere long become liable to the punishment of death as an adulteress. To avert this the king determined to destroy the husband, whom he sent back with a letter to Joab directing him to expose the bearer to death on the field on the first occasion that offered. Joab had no principle to prevent his compliance, and the known valour of Uriah suggested the course of proceeding. This ardour led him foremost in resisting a sally of the enemy, but under Joab's order he was suddenly abandoned by his comrades, and died sword in hand, together with thirty who remained with him, and who may be regarded as so many victims to the manœuvre against Uriah.

After the days of mourning for her husband, Bathsheba was brought to the palace and added to the number of David's wives. Now all seemed well. The crime had been secret, the legal consequences averted, and the fruit of sin might now be enjoyed in safety. So thought David—when he was aroused, as by a thunderstroke, from his ease and security by the prophet Nathan, who was commissioned to reprove his offences. This he accomplished by first awakening his sense of justice in the parable of the pet lamb; and when the king expressed his vehement indignation against the person who spared his own flock, but took this lamb, the property of his neighbour, to entertain a traveller—the prophet turned upon him with the memorable words—"*Thou* art the man:" and proceeded in strong language to declare the enormity of his offence. The conscience-stricken king attempted no palliation; he confessed in the fullest extent his crimes, which he deplored deeply, and besought forgiveness from the abounding mercy of God. This forgiveness, as before God, was not denied to the sincerity of his repentance: but seeing that by this deed he had "given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme," it was necessary that the Divine government should be justified before men by his punishment. Accordingly, the troubles which afterwards disturbed his reign were predicted as consequences of this transgression; and, as a more immediate mark of the Lord's displeasure, it was declared that the child to which Bathsheba had given birth should not live. Accordingly, the prophet had no sooner quitted the palace than the child became ill, and appeared at the point of death. The king in the anguish of his spirit "besought God for the child, and fasted, and went in and lay all night upon the earth." So great was his affliction and humiliation before God, that when at length the child actually departed, the "elders of his house" feared to impart the melancholy tidings to him. But David guessed the truth by their altered manner, and asked, "Is the child dead?" and being answered "He is dead," he immediately arose, washed and anointed himself, changed his dress, went to the tabernacle to worship, and on his return required refreshments to be set before him. This strange alteration of manner confounded his people: but he explained and justified it by the remark, "While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again?—I shall go to him, but he will not return to me."

The next year another son by Bathsheba was born to him, to whom the name of SOLOMON was given. This child became a special object of the Divine favour, and the prophet Nathan was commanded to confer upon him the additional name of ***Jedidiah***, or "beloved of the Lord;" and it was ere long made known to David that this child was his destined successor in the throne, to the exclusion of the elder sons, Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah.

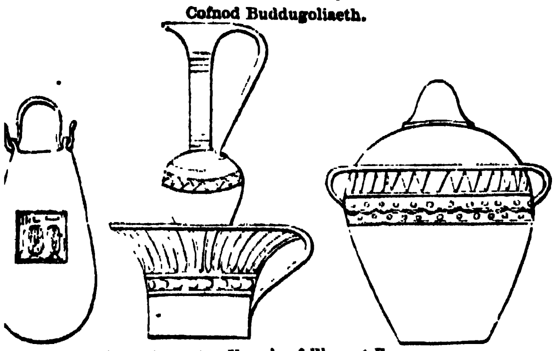
The punishments by which the guilt of David was to be atoned, did not involve failure in his attack upon the children of Ammon. The measure of their guilt was full, and they were accordingly delivered into the hand of their enraged enemy, who in person conducted the final assault upon their fortifications. Rabbah fell, and its inhabitants were subjected to an execution more severe than was common even in those times of barbarous warfare. The foolish king Hanun seems to have been among the slain, for his crown was among the spoils brought to Jerusalem, and was adopted as the state crown of the kings of Israel. It was set with precious stones, and is said to have weighed, or rather to have been worth, a talent of gold.

The threatenings conveyed by the prophet, when sent by the Almighty to admonish David, had pointed to evils which were to arise in his own house, or to sufferings which he would have to undergo through the vices and ambition of his own children. The evils thus predicted, and which may be said to have embittered the remainder of his days, were not long delayed.

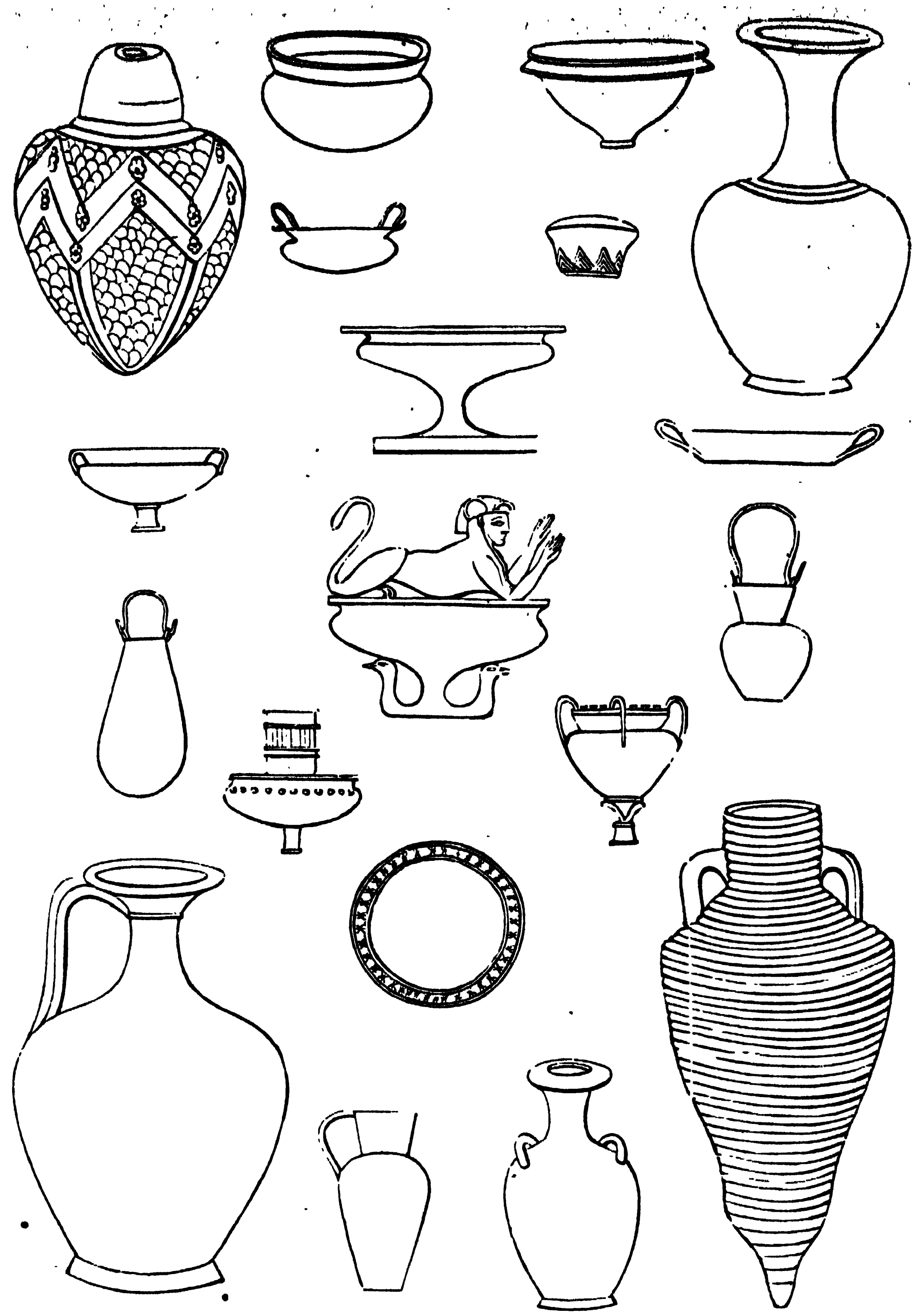
Amnon, the eldest son of the king, entertained a criminal passion for his half-sister Tamar, which, under the pretence of being sick, and of requiring her presence to prepare for him some of those dainty cakes which she knew well how to make, he found the means of gratifying. This enormity gave deep offence to the damsel's full brother Absalom, who took her under his protection, and waited quietly an opportunity of exacting an ample measure of vengeance for this deep wrong, which the king himself suffered to pass with a slight rebuke. Two years the fire of vengeance lay smouldering in the breast of Absalom, and then the devouring flame burst forth with terrible effect, when least suspected and when the ground of offence appeared to be forgotten. Absalom had considerable possessions in flocks; and the sheep-shearing being a season of much rejoicing among the Orientals, he then gave a grand entertainment to his friends and relatives. To colour his design, he respectfully invited his father to be present. The king declined to burden him with such an expense; but being thus put off his guard, he cheerfully allowed Amnon to be of the party, and he accordingly repaired, with the other sons of the king, to Absalom's country-seat at Hazor. Now, the hour of long-cherished vengeance had arrived to Absalom. He had tutored his servants in his horrid purpose, enjoining them, on a given signal from him, to fall upon Amnon and despatch him, assuring them of indemnity for the act. Accordingly, in the height of the feast, when the company became warm with wine, the fatal signal was given, and the attendants fell suddenly upon the first-born of David, and slew him on the spot.



745.—Military Trophy.
Cofnod Buddugoliaeth.



746.—Egyptian Vessels of Elegant Form.
Llestri Aiphtaidd o Ffurf Hardd.



747.—Domestic and Ornamental Vessels of the Egyptians, collected from various Egyptian Sculptures.
Llestri Teuluaidd ac Addurniadol yr Aiphtiaid, wedi eu casglu o amryw Feddrodau Aiphtaidd.



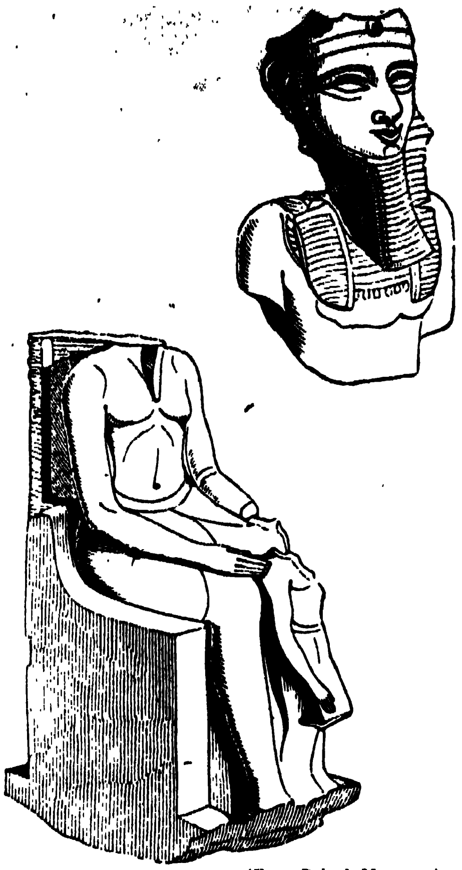
748.—Arab Huts and Sheep-cotes at Bushire.
Pebyll Arabaidd a Chorlanau Defaid yn Bushire.



749.—A Musical Procession.
Gorymdaith Gerddorol.



750.—David blessing the People. (Adapted from Poussin.)—I Chron. xvi.
Dafydd yn bendithio'r Bobl. (Wedi ei gyfaddasu o Poussin.)



752.—Beard-case. (From British Museum.)
Gwain Farf. (O'r Amgueddfau Frutanaidd.)



751.—Nathan and David. (B. West.)—2 Sam. xii.
Nathan a Dafydd.



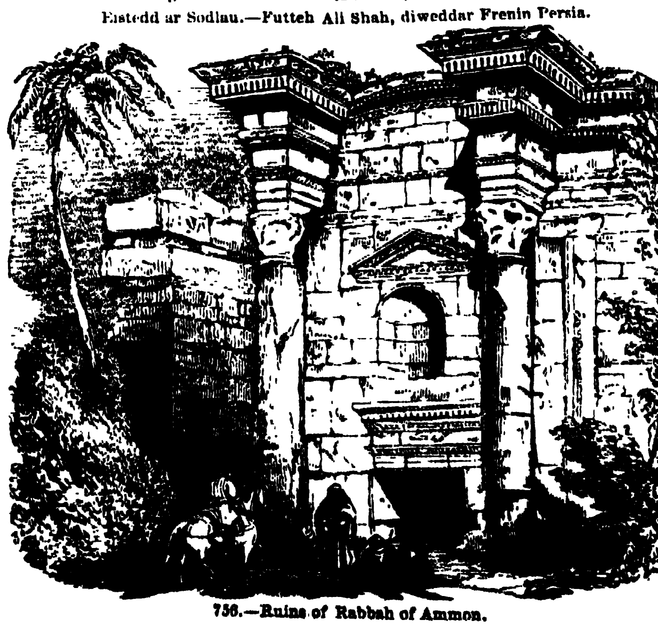
753.—Beards.—*a*, Syrian Jew; *b*, Arabian; *c*, Persian.
Barfau.—*a*, Iuddew Syriaidd; *b*, Arabaidd; *c*, Persiaidd.



755.—Sitting on Heels.—Futteh Ali Shah, late King of Persia.
Eistedd ar Sodlau.—Futteh Ali Shah, diweddar Frenin Persia.



734.—Beards.—*a*, Turkish Sheik; *b*, Mameluke; *c*, Turkish Officer shaved; *d*, *e*, Turkish Gentlemen.
Barfau.—*a*, Sheis Tyrcaidd; *b*, Mameluc; *c*, Swyddog Tyrcaidd eilliedig; *d*, *e*, Boneddwyr Aiphtaidd.



756.—Ruins of Rabbah of Ammon.
Adfeilion Rabbah Ammon.

This put the other princes into such consternation, that, expecting the same fate, they hastened to quit the house, and, mounting their mules, fled to Jerusalem. The news that Absalom had slain *all* the king's sons, however, reached the city before them, and their safe arrival was therefore hailed as a relief by the afflicted king.

Absalom, in dread of the king's resentment, or rather, fearing that public opinion might constrain his too fond father to bring him to punishment, fled the country, and took refuge with his mother's father, Talmai, king of Geshur. He remained there three years in voluntary exile; in which time David's grief for the loss of Amnon abated, and his anger against Absalom began to cool. This was the handsomest and most beloved of his sons; and the paternal heart longed to recall him from his banishment. But David was afraid to do this by his own spontaneous act; and he was therefore glad when Joab, penetrating his wishes, employed a clever woman of Tekoah to bring a pretended case before the throne for judgment, the decision on which afforded her the desired occasion of declaring that in this case he had in fact decided that of his own son, and pressed him to "recall his banished." The king failed not to detect the hand of Joab in this: and he sent for him, and told him that he granted the required pardon, and authorized him to bring Absalom home. On his return he was not admitted to the king's presence, but was directed to retire to his own house, and not to make his appearance at court. Joab also, being satisfied with what he had done, was content to leave the rest to the king, and ceased to pay any particular attention to Absalom. This restraint was by no means satisfactory to the impatient and restless temper of the prince, who sent repeatedly for Joab, with a design of inducing him to intercede with the king for a complete reconciliation. But Joab came not: on which Absalom ordered his servants to set fire to a field of barley belonging to him, and then he soon made his appearance to complain of the wrong done to him. The prince soon pacified him, and engaged him to use his influence on his behalf, declaring that if he were judged worthy of death for what he had done, he would sooner die at once, than live any longer under such restraint.

After having so long denied himself the solace of looking upon and embracing a son still so dear to his heart, the king was without much difficulty persuaded to admit him to his presence. Absalom, on appearing once more before his father, "bowed himself on his face towards the ground before the king;" but David, like the father in the parable of the Prodigal Son, no longer restrained the fulness of his emotions, but bestowed the kiss of peace and of intense paternal affection upon his handsomest and most engaging, but most profligate son.

It appears that it was by this time fully known that David considered the succession to his throne to lie, by a Divine appointment over which he had no control, with the son, now a boy, whom Bathsheba had given to him. It was this fact probably which influenced Absalom to the undertaking of seizing the throne in his father's life-time. He must have considered himself, and, as the result shows, must have been regarded by the nation generally, as the natural heir, on whom, but for this intervention, the crown would in the course of nature have devolved upon the demise of David. If this had not occurred, he would probably have been contented to wait till that event took place: but now, every year that passed diminished the chance of his being then able to oppose any successful resistance to the nominated successor, who in a few years more would be brought conspicuously before the notice of the people as the chosen of God, and who would in that character engage all the interests of the state in support of claims so highly sanctioned, and by that time so generally acknowledged.

Under these views, the first care of Absalom, after his appearance at court had restored him to liberty of action, was to ingratiate himself with the people, and to let it appear that he regarded himself as the heir apparent, and claimed to be considered as such. He therefore assumed much of state, and appeared in public with little less than regal attendance. He had horses and chariots, and even kept in his service fifty men to run before him. Having by such means prepared the people to respect his claims, by showing that they were by no means abandoned by himself, he was next at much pains by his affable demeanour, and by hints of what he would effect for the public good, to create and foster the vague expectation of benefit, which the people generally have always been disposed to connect with the idea of a new reign and a young and untried sovereign. Of David they knew the best and the worst; but Absalom they looked upon as a fountain of unknown blessings, the depth of which appeared the greater from not having been fathomed.

One of the chief functions of royalty in the East is, and always has been, the administration of justice: and it seems that the reputation of David was so high for wisdom and justice, that many causes came before him which ought to have gone before the inferior tribunals, or which were brought from such tribunals by appeal to him. The number of these cases was greater than David could well dispose of in the time allowed to his judicial functions; and hence many of the suitors had to complain of what, in countries of prompt adjudication, would be regarded as a delay of justice. Absalom failed not to take advantage of this circumstance, which seemed to afford almost the only tangible grievance of which he could lay hold. He would therefore make his appearance in the early morning, at which time the royal court of justice and of audience was open, "in the way of the gate" to the palace, where he would, with the most condescending affability, accost the suitors, inquire into their cases; and then would give vent to such phrases as "See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee." And then he would add—"O that *I* were made judge in the land, that every man who hath any suit or cause might come unto *me*, and *I* would do him justice." Men who were thus addressed, returned to their homes, and failed not to report to their friends and neighbours the graciousness of the king's son; the interest he had manifested in their affairs, and the wonderful changes for the better which might be expected if ever he should come to reign. Nor did they neglect to describe the great beauty of Absalom's person, which seems to have been the admiration of all the nation; for we are told that "in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty; from the sole of his foot, even to the crown of his head, there was no blemish in him." His magnificent head of hair was a special object of wonder.

When Absalom deemed his measures ripe for execution, he requested permission of his father to proceed to Hebron for the purpose of fulfilling a religious vow which he pretended to have made while at Geshur, while in fact that city had been fixed upon as the centre of union for all the rebels. David, only too happy to discern tokens of pious feeling and gratitude in his beloved son, very cheerfully consented; and Absalom thereupon proceeded to Hebron, accompanied by a great number of persons of rank in Jerusalem, whom he prevailed upon to be present at the sacred feast which he purposed to celebrate at Hebron. These persons were thus undesignedly led to countenance his rebellion; and by involving them in the suspicion of treason, he doubtless intended to retain them in his interest. Among the number was Ahithophel, once the counsellor and bosom friend of David; but who now retired from court and readily joined the rebels. This secession of Ahithophel was a great blow to the cause of David, and as great a triumph in that of Absalom; for the reputation of Ahithophel stood so high for political sagacity and discretion, that his words were regarded as oracles throughout the land, and people could not but think that a cause to which he lent his countenance must be likely to succeed. On Absalom's arrival at Hebron, the standard of rebellion was at once raised; he was proclaimed King of Israel, and messengers were sent through the land to proclaim his accession to the throne, in the words "Absalom doth reign!" without expressly avowing the treason, or intimating that David was dead, or had admitted him to a share of his authority. Thus while David's loyal subjects remained in uncertainty, Absalom's party became more formidable and increased daily in numbers.

When the afflicting tidings of his son's rebellion, and the revolt of the great body of the people, reached David, he resolved to quit Jerusalem with his personal friends and adherents; as he did not deem the small force on which he could rely in this trying emergency equal to the defence of the metropolis against the powerful army of Absalom. He was accompanied in his flight by all his body-guards, and also by the high-priests Zadok and Abiathar, and by the Levites bearing the ark of the Covenant. But after having crossed the brook Kidron, David prevailed upon the priests and Levites to return to the city, charging Zadok however to send him from time to time intelligence of the proceedings of the rebels by his son Ahimaaz, and by Jonathan the son of Abiathar. The feeling of David under this trying emergency is well shown by the terms which he employed in giving these directions, which enable us clearly to discern that he traced this calamity to its source, in the judgment which had been pronounced against him in the matter of Uriah: "Carry back the ark of God into the city. If I find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and show me both it and his habitation: but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold here I am, let him do with me as seemeth good unto him." After this the king went up the ascent of the Mount of Olives, "and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot, and all the people with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went."

SUNDAY XXX.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

WHEN the wretched and mistaken traitor Judas, who had been anxiously watching the result of these proceedings, saw that Jesus was condemned — that his acknowledgment that he was the Messiah had not been attended with the expected effects—and that Christ himself had not exerted the Divine powers which rested in him for the maintenance of his claim—he was conscience-stricken and terrified at the part he had himself taken. He went forthwith to the council, and, casting down the silver he had received, cried, "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed innocent blood." But they dismissed him with the cool assurance that this was not their affair, but his; upon which the miserable man went away and hanged himself. The money which he had left with them could not be put into the treasury, because it was "the price of blood;" and they therefore bought with it a field in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, called the Potter's field, and set that field apart as a burying-place for strangers.

Although the Jewish council had in fact condemned Jesus to death as a false prophet and a blasphemer, the sentence could not be carried into effect without being confirmed by the Roman procurator, the power of life and death having already been taken away from the Jewish tribunals. The procurator was always present in Jerusalem with a strong force at the Passover, to repress any disturbances which might arise among the vast numbers of people whom this festival never failed to bring to the holy city. The actual procurator was named Pontius Pilate, who had already held the office for six years, during which he had made himself so odious to the Jews by his venality, exactions, and severities, that he began to be alarmed lest they should forward complaints of his government to Rome, and thus bring him into disgrace with the Emperor Tiberius, who was known to be very attentive to complaints against the provincial governors. He was, therefore, at this time in a frame of mind not further to disoblige the Jewish authorities, but rather to take the line of conduct which he supposed would give them pleasure. To this person our Lord was hurried away in the early morning, that his confirmation of the judgment passed by the Sanhedrim might be obtained. The public business was transacted in the Prætorium, which had formerly been Herod's palace, and to this place our Saviour was taken. The Jews could not enter the Prætorium, lest they should contract defilement in the house of a heathen; and therefore Pilate caused his seat to be set in the Gabbatha, or Pavement, in front of the porch, where on such occasions he was wont to hear the matters that were brought before him.

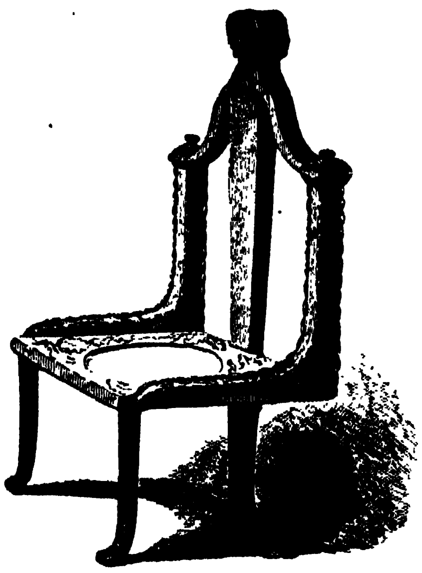
In order the rather to determine the governor to confirm their sentence, the accusers sank as much as possible the religious point, which was uppermost in their own minds, and strove to give prominence and colouring to the political aspect of the accusation, alleging that Christ wished to excite a tumult, and to establish an earthly kingdom. Pilate had already, without doubt, heard some things respecting Jesus, for he would seem from the beginning to have formed a definite view with regard to him, as being a well-meaning enthusiast. Entertaining this view, and being well aware how prone the Jewish ecclesiastics were to act upon the impulses of private hatred, he commenced the proceedings by putting questions with the view of ascertaining whether these fanatical persons had really just cause for condemning to death the man they had brought before him. The members of the Sanhedrim, who had been accustomed to see the governor generally give a simple assent to their decisions, were obviously unprepared for any such investigation; and they answered, somewhat impertinently, "If this fellow were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee." Pilate, however, obviously considering that there was nothing in the case to bring it under his jurisdiction, told them to go and put in force the enactments of their own law against him—implying that he considered the punishment of scourging, or of expulsion from the synagogue, quite sufficient for the occasion. Their quiet answer, "It is not lawful for us *to put any man* TO DEATH," gave him very plainly to understand that no less punishment would satisfy them. Then seeing clearly that Pilate, who had so often been compelled to listen to their religious disputes, would not take up the case on such grounds, they pressed more strongly the charge of treason against the Roman government, alleging that he had forbidden tribute to be paid to Cæsar, saying, that he "himself was Christ, a king." On hearing this, Pilate went into the porch, where Jesus stood in custody of the guard, and asked, "Art thou the king of the Jews?" To this Jesus, as if to ascertain the sense in which he asked the question, whether in the earthly sense which it must have had among the Romans, or in the higher spiritual sense which it had or should have had among the Jews, asked, "Sayest thou this of thyself, or did others tell thee of it." Pilate answered with some heat, "Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have brought thee unto me: What hast thou done?"—which seems to imply that he desired his question to be understood in the sense which the term commonly bore among the Jews. Jesus then readily replied, that his kingdom was *not* of this world; adding, that he who had permitted himself to be apprehended by his enemies, and brought before his tribunal without resistance, could have no political designs. Still desirous of adhering to a point which was necessary for a judicial opinion, without troubling himself with other matters, Pilate asked, "But dost thou still claim to be a king?" Jesus denied not that he was a king, but he guarded the admission by intimating that his kingdom was not earthly—its subjects being such as sought after and loved *the truth.* Pilate, with all the contempt of a superficial man of the world towards the higher objects of existence, exclaimed, "What is truth?" and, without waiting for an answer, went out to the accusers, confirmed in his first notion, that Christ was merely a well-meaning enthusiast, whom, as innocent of the designs laid to his charge, he felt some sympathy for, and wished to deliver from his malignant persecutors.

He declared to the excited assembly, that he could not find any crime in him. On this the accusers vehemently answered, that he had set the whole country in an uproar from Judea even unto Galilee. The mention of Galilee, which was not in his jurisdiction, but under the notorious Herod Antipas, suggested to Pilate a means of getting rid of this affair—without, on the one hand, shedding innocent blood, or, on the other, offending the Sanhedrim—by sending the prisoner to Herod, who was then in Jerusalem. The doubts which Herod entertained respecting Jesus have already been indicated. He was therefore glad to have him before him, in the hope of seeing some miracle performed by him. But the divine Saviour was not minded to use his high powers for the mere purpose of gratifying an idle curiosity. Not only so, but when he saw the empty and vain reasons of the worldling before whom he stood, he remained silent while questioned by him. Provoked at the indignity which he fancied to be thus offered to him, the Tetrarch abandoned Jesus to the scornful treatment of his soldiers. Clothed in a bright-coloured robe, as a mark of contempt in regard to the Messianic dignity which he assumed, Herod sent Christ back again to the Roman governor. The latter, finding the case thus returned upon his hands, had again to contend with the embarrassment between his fear of man and his dislike to abandon a person so clearly innocent to his fate. One further alternative then occurred to his mind. It was a custom at this feast that the governor should set free a prisoner; and there happened to be then in prison a very notorious robber and murderer named Barabbas, whom he supposed the Jews would not willingly liberate. He therefore proposed to them the choice between this man and "the king of the Jews," as he sarcastically denominated Jesus. The members of the Sanhedrim then present forthwith exerted themselves to induce the crowd to call for the release of Barabbas. It was at this stage of the proceedings that Pilate received a message from his wife, entreating him to deal justly with the person now before him, on whose account she had been visited with painful dreams that night. This had some effect upon Pilate, but not enough to induce him to stem that strong current of popular clamour which, contrary to his expectation, was expressed in the loud cry of "Not this man, but Barabbas."

Yet the governor was willing to try one last resource. He resolved to scourge Jesus, in the hope that this might suffice to appease the madness of the people; and he had the more reason to hope this, as the Roman scourging was very far more severe than the flagellation in use among the Jews themselves. It was inflicted by a scourge of thongs twisted together; and sometimes, in order to increase the severity of the lash, small cubic pieces of bone were woven into it. It is described, by those who witnessed its effects, as lacerating the flesh, and laying bare the veins and arteries. To this terrible punishment was the Saviour of men subjected; and the soldiery, not satisfied with inflicting the agonies of the scourge, but taking the hint from the treatment he had already received from Herod, proceeded to invest him with the mock insignia of royalty. They set a diadem of sharp thorns upon his head, they placed in his hands a reed for a sceptre, and they cast over his bleeding shoulders a purple robe.



757.—Christ Scourged.
Crist yn cael ei Ffaugellu.



758.—Roman Judgment Seat. (From an unique example at Wilton House.)
Gorsedd Barn Rufeinaidd. (O esiampl hynod yn Wilton House.)



759.—Ecce Homo. (Correggio.)
Wele'r Dyn.



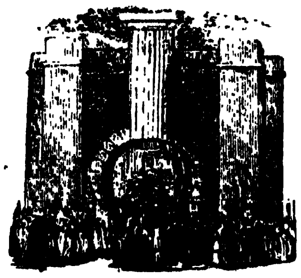
761.—Women at the Crucifixion. (West.)
Y Gwragedd wrth y Groes.



760.—Via Dolorosa.—Jerusalem.



763.—Psalm cxxi.



764.—Psalm cxxii.



765.—Psalm cxxiii.



766 —Psalm cxxiv.



767.—Psalm cxxv.



768.—Psalm cxxvi.



769.—Psalm cxxvii.



762.—Psalm cxx.



HEN I was in trouble, I called upon the Lord: and he heard me.—1.

Psalm cxxvii.

Like as the arrows in the hand of the giant: even so are the young children.—5.

Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate.—6.



773.—Psalm cxxxi.



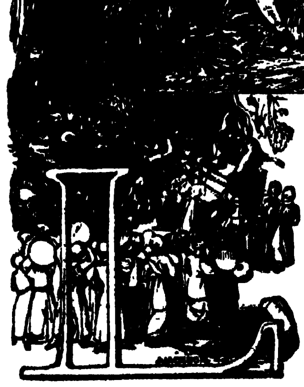
775.—Psalm cxxxiii.



776.—Psalm cxxxiv.



774.—Psalm cxxxii.



ORD, remember David, and all his trouble.—1.

Psalm cxxxvii.

By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered thee, O Sion.—1.

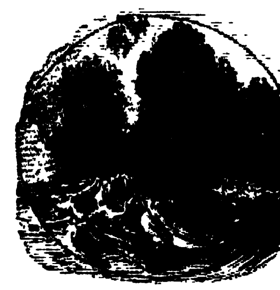
As for our harps, we hanged them up upon the trees that are therein.—2.



770.—Psalm cxxviii.



771.—Psalm cxxix.



772.—Psalm cxxx.



777 —Psalm cxxxv.



778.—Psalm cxxxvi.



779.—Psalm cxxxvii.



780.—Psalm cxxxviii.

SUNDAY XXXI.—THE PSALMS.

OUR task is now to inquire in what the distinguishing characteristic of Hebrew poetry is to be found, since it does not consist in any of the circumstances which we have already considered.

The grand and indeed the sole characteristic appears to be in what is usually called, since Bishop Lowth, PARALLELISM, and which De Wette distinguishes as "the rhythm of thought." This consists in a certain equality, resemblance, or relationship between the members of each period; so that in two lines or members of the same period, things shall answer to things, and words to words, as if fitted to each other by a rule or measure. It is in great measure owing to this form of composition that our excellent authorized version, though executed in prose, retains so much of a poetical cast; for that version being strictly word for word after the original, the form and order of the original sentences are preserved, which by this artificial structure, this regular alternation and correspondence of parts, makes the ear sensible of a departure from the common style and tone of prose.

The origin of this form of poetical composition among the Hebrews is deduced by Lowth and others from the manner in which they were accustomed to chant their sacred hymns. They were accompanied by music, and were alternately sung by opposite choirs; sometimes one choir performing the hymn itself, while the other sung a particular distich, which was regularly interposed at stated intervals. In this manner we learn that Moses with the Israelites chanted the ode at the Red Sea (Exod. xv. 20, 21); and the same order is observable in most of the Psalms which are composed in this form. On some occasions, however, the musical performance was differently conducted, one of the choirs singing a single verse to the other, while the other constantly added a verse in some respects correspondent. Of this the following distich is an example:—

> "Sing praises unto Jehovah, for he is good:
> Because his mercy endureth for ever" (Ps. cxxxvi. 1),

which Ezra informs us (iii. 10, 11) was sung by the priests and Levites in alternate choirs "after the ordinance of David, king of Israel;" as may indeed be collected from the 136th Psalm itself, in which the latter verse, sung by the latter choir, forms a perpetual epode. Of the same nature is the song of the women concerning Saul and David (1 Sam. xviii. 7); and in the very same manner does Isaiah describe the Seraphim as chanting the praises of Jehovah:—"they cried one to another," that is, alternately,—

> "Holy, holy, holy Jehovah, God of hosts!
> The whole earth is filled with his glory!" (Isa. vi. 3.)

There is much, doubtless, in this; but the following circumstances probably also contributed in some measure to the formation of the rhythm of thought. The Hebrew, and whoever like him stood at the point of intellectual culture where the mind is in a condition to seize only certain general and simple relations of things, was fond of conveying his ideas and feelings in short sentences; these sentences were connected with each other in a manner which possesses but little variety; usually according to the law of resemblance and contrast, and for the most part only in couplets, because the combination of several sentences implies the notice of a greater variety of relations. A peculiar fondness is manifested, in this style of speaking, for tautology and comparison. There is usually a want of versatility and variety of expression, and the desire to express the idea fully, and to exhibit it in different points of view, whence the same thing is often repeated in synonymous expressions and figures. Now if a person who speaks in this way is desirous of introducing into his discourse a regular rhythm, a proportion between the several proportions presents itself as a ready expedient, whose original law will be that of resemblance and contrast—the law by which, in other cases, one proportion is ranged with another.

After these remarks nothing will appear more natural than such a form of discourse as that of Job vii. 1:—

> "Is there not a warfare for man upon the earth,
> Are not his days like the days of an hireling?
> As a servant he earnestly desireth the shadow,
> As a hireling he looketh for the reward:"

where each thought is twice repeated, and after each repetition there is a pause.

But the parallelism of members is of different kinds. The two principal laws of resemblance, and contrast or antithesis, produce what Lowth calls the *synonymous* and *antithetic* parallelism: a third is founded upon a resemblance in the form of construction and progression of the thoughts, and is denominated by the same authority *synthetic* parallelism. This classification has been varied by more recent writers, but we shall adhere to this arrangement, noticing the suggested variations as we proceed.

Synonymous Parallelism. According to Lowth, parallel lines synonymous are those which correspond to one another, by expressing the same sentiment in different, but nearly equivalent terms. Bishop Jebb objects to this as not sufficiently discriminative, and proposes the title of *Cognate Parallels;* but a writer in the 'British Critic,' followed by the Rev. T. H. Horne, prefers the title of *Parallel Lines Gradational.* It appears to us that Jebb's title is the best; for while, on the one hand, the parallels are not often sufficiently similar to be called "synonymous," on the other the "gradational" parallel is not always very obvious in the class of instances designated by it. It is rather a species of the class than the class itself.

Sometimes the examples under this head are not only synonymous, but identical, or a repetition with suspense, as in Job xviii. 13:—

> "There devours the strength of his skin,
> There devours his strength—the first-born of death."

It is undoubtedly true that where the cognate parallels are multiplied, a gradual rise in the sense, completed to a sort of climax in the concluding member, may be traced; and the reader who peruses the poetical parts of Scripture with this idea present to his mind, will find a new and unexpected source of enjoyment in the Divine Word opened to him. This will appear more or less in the examples which we subjoin:—

> "O, the blessedness of the man
> Who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly;
> And hath not stood in the way of sinners;
> And hath not sat in the seat of the scornful." (Ps. i. 1.)

"The exclamation with which the Psalm opens," says Bishop Jebb, "belongs equally to each line of the succeeding triplet. In the triplet itself each line consists of three members; and the lines gradually rise one above the other, not merely in their general sense, but specially throughout their corresponding members. To *walk* implies no more than casual intercourse; to *stand*, closer intimacy; to *sit*, fixed and permanent connection:—the *counsel*, the ordinary place of meeting, a public resort; the *way*, the select and chosen foot-path; the *seat*, the habitual and final resting-place:—the *ungodly*, negatively wicked; *sinners*, positively wicked; the *scornful*, scoffers at the very name or notion of piety or goodness."

> "Who shall ascend the mountain of Jehovah?
> Who shall stand within his holy place?
> The clean of hands, and the pure in heart." (Ps. xxiv. 3, 4.)

Here, as the same elegant writer explains, "To *ascend* marks progress; to *stand*, stability and confirmation; the *mountain of Jehovah*, the site of the divine sanctuary; the *holy place*, the sanctuary itself: and in correspondence with the advance in the two lines which form the first couplet, there is an advance in the members of the third line; the *clean of hands*, and the *pure in heart*: the *clean of hands* shall *ascend* to *the mountain of Jehovah*, the *pure in heart* shall *stand* in *his holy place*."

After these explanations the reader will find no difficulty in tracing the cognate parallels gradually ascending, which occur in the following further examples:—

> "Thy righteousness is like the great mountains,
> Thy judgments like a great deep;
> Thou preservest man and beast, O Lord." (Ps. xxxvi. 7.)

> "I am weary of my life,
> Therefore will I give loose to my complaints,
> Will speak the sorrows of my soul." (Job x. 1.)

> "My life is spent in grief,
> And my years in sighing;
> My strength faileth by means of my punishment,
> And my bones are consumed." (Ps. xxxi. 11.)

SUNDAY XXXI.—BIBLE HISTORY.

OF Ahithophel's presence with Absalom at Hebron, it seems not to have been until this time that David became aware. This news gave him much concern, as he manifestly apprehended more danger from his tried abilities than from the number or courage of Absalom's followers. He implored God that "his counsel might be turned into foolishness," or that his sagacious advice might be despised as folly: and all those who heard the supplication could not but be much impressed with the manner in which it was speedily answered.

In his progress over the Mount of Olives, David was met by his friend Hushai, the Archite, who came to offer him his service, and to accompany him in his retreat. But the king informed him that he might serve his interests far better by remaining in Jerusalem, and by there bringing his character and influence to bear upon the progress of events.

The arrival of Absalom at Jerusalem soon followed the retreat of David; and there, by the advice of Ahithophel, he forthwith took such measures as were calculated to assure his followers that in drawing the sword he had cast away the scabbard, and that they were not likely to be compromised by any future reconciliation between him and his father. The next piece of advice tendered by Ahithophel was not so well received—was indeed turned to foolishness, according to the prayer of David. Aware that delay in striking a decisive and final stroke must ruin the cause of Absalom, by enabling the fugitive king to collect his resources, Ahithophel urged in council the importance of sending an adequate force in pursuit of David, while he and his attendants were weary and dispirited, and unprepared for an attack. Hushai, however, who had succeeded in insinuating himself into the confidence and councils of Absalom, opposed this advice with great plausibility and address. He described in very forcible language the valour and military skill of David, the courage and exasperation of his followers: "Thou knowest," he said, "thy father and his men, that they be mighty men, and they be chafed in their minds, as a bear robbed of her whelps in the field;" and he suggested the probability that by some stratagem of war, in which he was so well versed, he would contrive to surprise and vanquish his assailants, unless their numbers were overwhelmingly great. On these grounds he advised Absalom to delay his operations, until he should be able to collect so vast an army, consisting of the strength of the whole nation, as would render resistance hopeless, and ensure the destruction of David and his adherents. This counsel seemed to Absalom and all his advisers far preferable to that previously given, and it was concluded that it should be followed. On this Ahithophel, regarding the cause of Absalom as lost, retired to his own home, and, after settling his affairs, deliberately committed suicide by hanging himself; and thus with his own hand inflicting the well-deserved punishment of his treachery against one who had leaned upon him with such entire confidence as David.

The delay thus secured afforded an opportunity of sending Ahimaaz and Jonathan with the intelligence to David, accompanied by the advice that he should not delay to provide for his own safety. The young men accomplished this task not without danger and difficulty. They were careful not to be seen in the city, and therefore remained outside the town, near the well of En-Rogel, and to prevent suspicion the message they were to bear was taken to them by a girl. This communication, and their hasty departure immediately after, was, however, noticed by a lad to whom these persons were known, and he mentioned the circumstance in the town, on which a hot pursuit after them was commenced, and they were traced to a house in Bahurim, in which they had taken refuge to prevent themselves from being captured. The woman of the house had, however, hidden them in a dry cistern, which was in the court of the house, and covered over the mouth with boards, on which she laid out some corn. Absalom's men searched the house in vain for them, and then gave over the pursuit, and returned to Jerusalem. The young men then quitted the cistern and hastened to David, who delayed not to place the Jordan between himself and his rebellious son, by proceeding to the tribes beyond the river, who, not having been so open to the personal influence of Absalom, were still firm in their allegiance. On his march to the river, on passing Bahurim, a city belonging to the tribe of Benjamin, Shimei, an inhabitant of the place, and a near relative of King Saul, pursued David, imprecating curses upon him, accusing him in the most violent manner of the destruction of the late king and his family, and exulting that the day of vengeance was at length come. David's attendants were highly enraged at this insulting treatment of their revered master, and Abishai, his nephew, implored permission to put him to instant death. But the king refused, in language which showed that he received all these wrongs in a chastened spirit, and in that spirit consented to endure even the rabid insults and abuse of foul-mouthed and evil-minded men. "Behold," said the humbled king, "my son, who came forth out of my bowels, seeketh my life; how much more now may this Benjamite do it? Let him alone and let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him."

Having crossed the river, David proceeded to Mahanaim, in which Ishbosheth had reigned, and determined to make that strong city his head-quarters. He was well received in the country beyond Jordan. Men strong in arms gathered around him from all parts of Gilead and Bashan, and persons of substance hastened with loyal alacrity to bring in supplies of provisions for the king and his men. They "brought beds, and basins, and earthern vessels, and wheat, and barley, and flour, and parched corn, and beans, and lentils, and parched pulse, and honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that were with him, to eat: for they said, the people is hungry and weary, and thirsty in the wilderness."

Absalom, on his part, acted with as much promptitude as was compatible with the plan of operations which he had adopted. He soon crossed the Jordan in pursuit of his father with a powerful army, which was under the command of his cousin Amasa. The delay, however, was fatal to his cause, as it enabled David to collect a force capable of meeting him in the open field. The king expressed an intention to command in person; but the people would not hear of this, and their declaration throws some light upon the fierce spirit in which this most unnatural contest was carried on, and also illustrates the strong feelings of personal attachment to the person of a king which are usually brought out among a large body of his subjects when he falls into adverse circumstances:—"Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die will they care for us; but now thou art worth ten thousand of us; therefore now it is better that thou succour us out of the city." The king did not take the command of the army in person, and thus one circumstance, which might have increased the revolting effect of these most unnatural transactions, was spared. The army was disposed in three divisions, under the command of Joab the commander-in-chief, his brother Abishai, and Ittai the commander of the foreign soldiers in the pay of David.

As the king beheld his gallant army march forth to war against his recreant son, the king and the father strove hard within him. The father prevailed, and with visible emotion he enjoined the commanders, in the hearing of the troops, to respect the life of "the young man, even Absalom, for his sake."

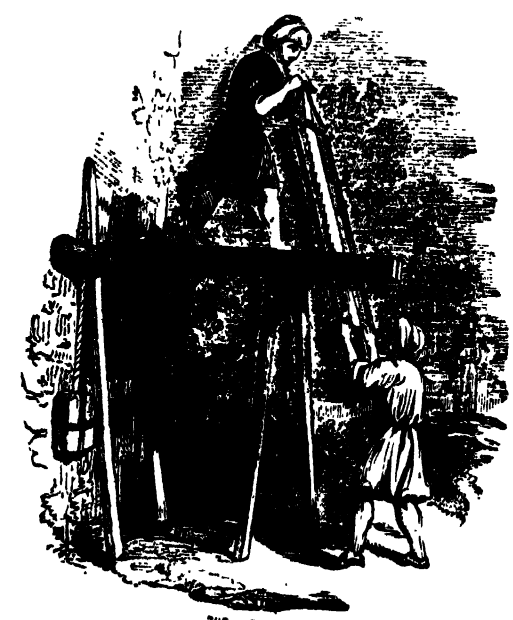
This charge was, however, disregarded. Absalom's army being defeated by the better disciplined troops of David, and the skilful generalship of Joab, Absalom, mounted on a swift mule, endeavoured to save himself by flight; but as he sped through the forest, a branch of an oak caught the long and beautiful hair in which he gloried, and his beast hastened on, leaving him suspended there. The soldiers who saw him in this condition were mindful of the king's injunction, and feared to molest him. One of the men, however, informed Joab of the circumstance: "And why," asked that stern warrior, "didst thou not smite him to the ground? and I would have given thee ten shekels of silver and a girdle." The man pleaded the king's injunction, and remarked, with some truth, that if he had slain Absalom, Joab himself would have left the consequences at his door. The general then provided himself with three darts, and, hastening to the spot where Absalom hung, smote him through the heart. The body was then taken down, and cast into a great pit in the forest, and a large heap, or tumulus, of stones was piled over the spot. This kind of monument—which among the Hebrews implied a kind of detestation of the act in which he died (compare Josh. vii. 26), was not of the kind which Absalom designed, and had indeed erected for himself. We are told that "he had in his life-time taken and reared up for himself a monument, which is in the king's dale; for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance: and he called the pillar after his own name; and it is called unto this day Absalom's monument." There is at the present day a sort of monument bearing this name in the valley of Jehoshaphat, east of Jerusalem, which is usually supposed to be the "king's dale" mentioned in this passage. Most



781.—Death of Sisera. (N. Poussin.)—Judges vi.
Marwolaeth Sisera.



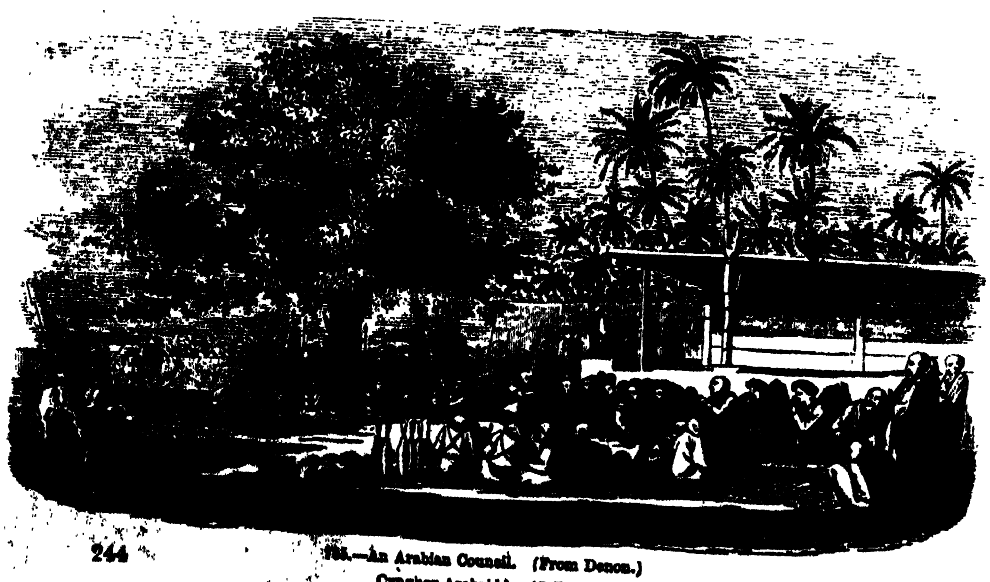
782.—The Woman of Tekoah. (Drouais.)—2 Sam. xiv.
Y Wraig o Tecoah.



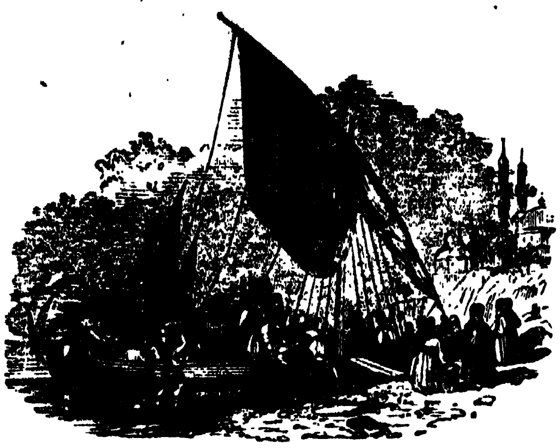
783.—Sawyers.
Llifwyr.



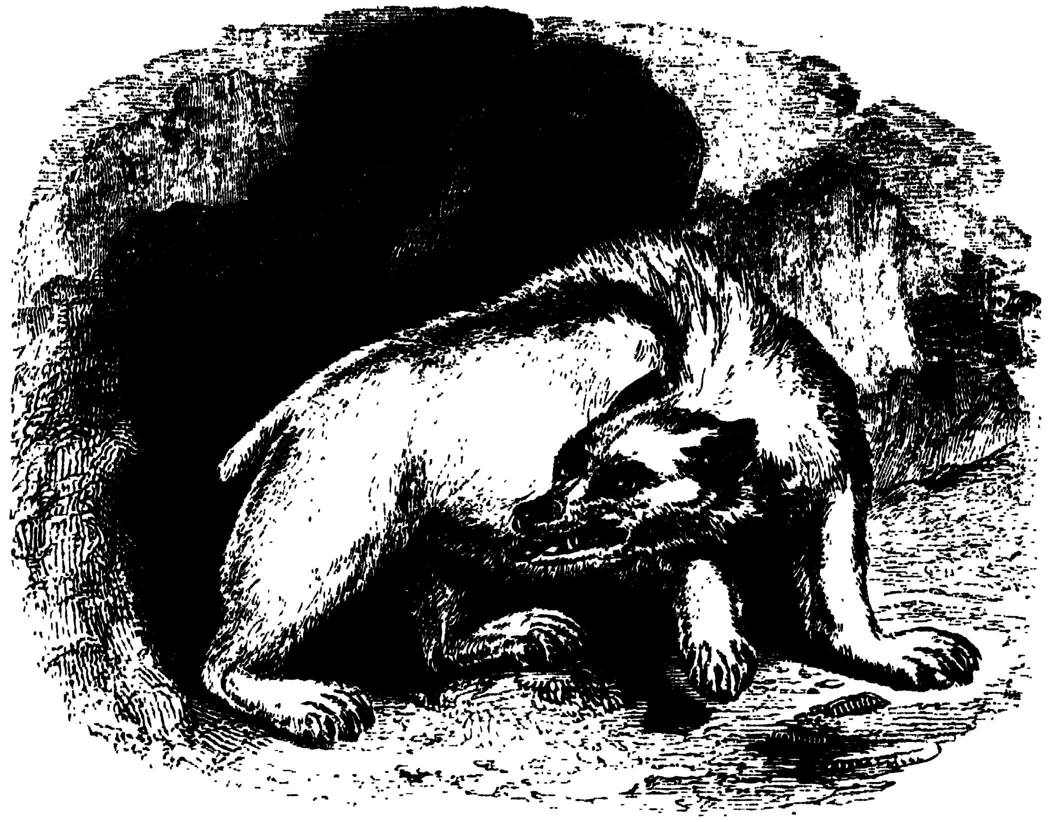
784.—Flight on Mules.
Ffoad ar Fulod.



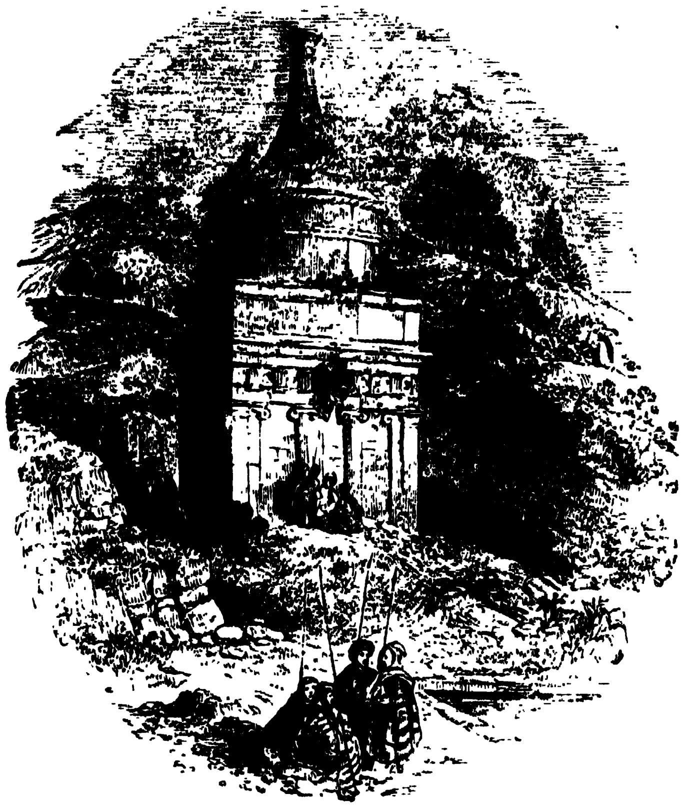
785.—An Arabian Council. (From Denon.)
Cynghor Arabaidd. (O Denon.)



786.—Ferry-boat on the Nile.
Ysgraff ar y Nilus.



787.—Syrian Bear.
Arth Syriadd.



790.—Absalom's Tomb. Present appearance.
Beddrod Absalom. Yr ymddangosiad presennol.



788.—Race of Messengers.
Rhedfa Cenhadon.



789.—Absalom's Tomb. Former appearance. (From Cassas.)
Beddrod Absalom. Yr ymddangosiad gynt. (O Cassas.)

old writers on Biblical Antiquities have concluded that this must be the very monument which Absalom erected. But with the improved knowledge of ancient architecture which we now possess, a single glance at the engravings will suffice to show that this tomb or monument belongs to a much later age. It is close by the lower bridge over the Kidron, and is a square isolated block hewn out from the rocky ledge, so as to have an area or niche around it. The body of the monument is about twenty-four feet square, and is ornamented on each side with two columns and two half-columns of the Ionic order, with pilasters at the corners. The architrave exhibits triglyphs and Doric ornaments. The elevation is about eighteen or twenty feet to the top of the architrave, and thus far it is wholly cut out from the rock; but the adjacent rock not being here sufficiently high to complete the design, the upper part of the monument is carried up with mason-work of large stones. This consists, first, of two square layers, of which the upper one is smaller than the lower, and then a small dome or cupola runs up into a low spire, which appears to have formerly spread out at the top like an opening flame. This mason-work is about twenty feet high, giving to the whole monument a height of about forty feet. There is a small excavated chamber in the body of the tomb, into which a hole had been broken through one of the sides several centuries ago. A monument of this kind could not well be earlier, if so early as the time of Herod the Great; but the foreign ecclesiastics who crowded to Jerusalem in the fourth century found it there, and naturally enough strove to associate it with some Scriptural personage or incident. At first, however, it appears to have been called the tomb of Isaiah; and the first traveller who points to it as the tomb of Absalom is the Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela, in the eleventh century, since which time the accounts of travellers have been varying and inconsistent. We have the rather entered into these particulars, as this, and one or two other monuments of the same kind in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, have lately been upheld by high architectural authority as examples of the high condition of the arts in King David's reign.

The death of Absalom put an end to all further hostilities; the royal troops were recalled, and the rebels dispersed to their own homes.

David sat anxiously in the gate of Mahanaim, awaiting tidings from the battle, and trembling for the fate of Absalom. At length a swift runner was beheld approaching rapidly with tidings, and at some distance behind him another. They had both been despatched by Joab to announce the victory to the king. The first was Ahimaaz, the son of Zadok the priest; and he joyfully announced the defeat of the king's enemies: but when the king asked him, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" he evaded the answer; but Cushi, the other messenger, who had now come up, replied to the same question, "The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to seek thy hurt, be as that young man is." Immediately all the glory of that great victory, which restored to him a throne, became dim in the eyes of David. He withdrew hastily to the private chamber above the gate; and as the weary soldiers returned to the town, all the joy of their triumph was chilled by the bitter wail of the king: "O, my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would to God I had died for thee; O, Absalom my son, my son!"

This sorrowing retirement of the king, at a moment so critical, might have been attended with bad effects, had not the cool judgment of Joab interposed. He went up to David, and, without much heed of his feelings, plainly told him that his regal duty required him to show himself with a cheerful and thankful aspect before men who had hazarded their lives for his sake; and not leave them to conclude that he set no value upon their great services, but "loved his enemies and hated his friends." "I perceive," said Joab, very bluntly, "that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, it had pleased thee well." And he assured him that unless he came forth, all his adherents would abandon him before the next morning; "and that," he added, "will be worse for thee than all the evil that befel thee from thy youth until now."

The king, yielding to this influence, mastered his strong emotions and went forth to re-animate and encourage the men by his presence.

As the tribes generally had indicated a marked preference of Absalom, and had received him as king, David deemed it prudent to remain at Mahanaim until he should be publicly and formally invited by his subjects to resume the reins of government. By hastening at once to Jerusalem, it might have seemed as if he desired to reign by force of arms, against the will of his people: and this impression on their part could not have been favourable to his future influence and the permanence of his dynasty. The men of Israel were in general disposed to recall the king immediately after the defeat of Absalom; but a lack of unanimity prevented them for some time from inviting him to return, and they also appear to have been much engaged in disputes respecting the party to whom the blame of the late rebellion more particularly attached, as all were now anxious to excuse themselves from having taken a foremost part in unsuccessful treason.

When David was informed of this condition of affairs, he expressed much concern that his own tribe of Judah did not manifest more alacrity in his behalf: and he authorised the high-priests Zadok and Abiathar to impart his sentiments in the matter to the chief men of the tribe, to assure them of his abiding attachment, and to excite them to take an active part in effecting the king's return to his capital.

The policy of this separate appeal to the peculiar attachment of his own tribe, on the part of one who desired to reign over all the tribes as a united nation, seems more than questionable; but at this distance of time and place, we are not well competent to form a judgment respecting the considerations which may have determined the king to regard the danger of this course—which he could not have overlooked—as less than that of his recall being any longer delayed. This movement was so far successful as to induce the tribe of Judah to take the lead in recalling David to his government, and a deputation of the elders and principal men proceeded to Mahanaim to conduct the king back to Jerusalem.

On the return "a ferry-boat" was employed in conveying the king's household and baggage across the river Jordan; being the first and only time that we read of a ferry-boat being employed upon that river. It is now usually crossed on horseback in certain places known to be fordable; but it would seem that some kind of boat or raft was employed, in part at least, before the use of horses had become general among the Hebrews, which was far from being the case in the time of David. It is impossible to form any notion of such vessels but by reference to those which were employed under similar circumstances by the ancient Orientals, by comparison with those which now exist under similar conditions. For such reference and comparison adequate materials will be found in the engravings which accompany this page.

On the other side the river, the king was met by a body of elders from the other tribes of Israel, who seem to have been on the way to Mahanaim for the purpose of inviting his return. That David had taken an ill-considered step by accepting, or rather soliciting, a separate recall from his own tribe, is shown by what followed; for the elders of Israel, finding that his return had already been effected by the men of Judah without consulting them, waxed warm at the neglect, and at what seemed to them an underhand attempt of Judah to establish a peculiar claim on the king's favour. This was probably true, as neither party had forgotten or were likely to forget that David had for several years been king over Judah alone. Both parties professed to be actuated by zeal for the king, but were in reality influenced by the most rancorous jealousy of each other. The veil was soon torn aside; for the contest grew so hot, that at length when one man, bolder than the rest, raised the well known cry of revolt—"To your tents, O Israel!" the men of Israel followed him, and renounced their allegiance to David. This man was Sheba the son of Birchi, who immediately departed with his adherents to that part of the country in which the dislike to the predominance of Judah was supposed to be the strongest.

This defection of the other tribes, or rather, of a body of active malcontents among them, did but the more endear the king to the men of Judah, by whom he was conducted to Jerusalem. The first act of David on his return savours more of policy, than of gratitude to one who, great as were his former crimes, had given no recent cause of offence, but had evinced the strongest fidelity and had rendered the most signal services in a time of general defection and treachery. Joab he removed from the command of the army, and bestowed it upon Amasa, who had commanded the army of Absalom. The fact was, probably, that David deemed it good policy to gain over one who might be supposed to have much influence with the recreant tribes, who also might be the more easily brought to reason, when they saw at the head of David's army one who had lately been their own leader, and who could not be suspected of any predisposition to act with undue severity against them. The king was also probably not reluctant to find a plausible excuse for wreaking his resentment upon Joab for slaying Absalom, contrary to his express orders. He was not the less likely to remember this unforgivingly from his being unable publicly to resent an act which most men would be disposed to regard as a benefit conferred upon him.

SUNDAY XXXI—LIFE OF CHRIST.



WHEN they scornfully greeted him with the salutation which was commonly bestowed upon the emperor, and smote him with their rods upon the head, causing the thorny diadem to tear his sacred brows. At length Pilate bade them give over their cruel sport, and bring forth their prisoner to the people. Pilate preceded them, and said to the Sanhedrim, "I have brought him forth that ye may know I find no fault in him; and pointing to the pale and bleeding figure which then appeared arrayed in the robes of mockery, he cried, "Behold the man!" And were they not touched with compassion now? Was not their vengeance now satisfied? No: they no sooner saw him, than they cried with one voice, "Crucify him! crucify him!"

Pilate seems to have been appalled at the mad fury which he witnessed; and he told them to crucify him themselves, for he would himself have no hand in an act so unrighteous. This, however, conveyed no formal permission; and, accordingly, the Jews proceeded to urge their demand for the death of Christ as a matter of right. At first they had not wished to found their accusation against Jesus upon his alleged violation of their religious laws, concluding that they might bring the affair more quickly to a close by investing it with a political aspect. But when they saw that the governor did not take it up as they had expected, they reverted to their religious accusation. They cried, "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he hath made himself the Son of God." When Pilate heard this, he feared still more. He had already observed something extraordinary in the conduct of Christ: and when to this was added the dream of his wife, a sort of shuddering apprehension came upon him, that there might possibly be something supernatural in this Jesus, and that he might be the son of some heathen god. He therefore turned to him and asked, "Whence art thou?" He already knew he was from Galilee, and hence the question was, whether he claimed to derive his origin from heaven. Knowing that a further discussion would only serve to gratify the vain and idle curiosity of Pilate, Jesus was silent. Thus left to his own impressions and presentiments, which had become painful, the governor endeavoured to compel an answer by threats. "Speakest thou not to me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?" Perceiving the inward anguish which Pilate felt in his judgment concerning him, Jesus strengthened this impression by awakening in him the consciousness of his dependence upon a higher power; but knowing far better than his judge the awful significance attached to his judgment upon the Son of God, he added that the great guilt contained in it attached less to him than to the accusers. The more this expression of the divine Saviour showed that he was free from every feeling of personal hostility, the more heavily did his case press upon the mind of Pilate, and he wished with the more sincerity to be able to release him. He seems to have expressed himself to this effect to the people. They were therefore full of fury at the prospect that their prey might be torn from them; and delayed not to discharge the last arrow in their quiver; and it was effectual. They had recourse to the means which they knew would work most effectually upon Pilate. "If thou lettest this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend. Whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar." Knowing how easy it was to awaken suspicion in the mind of the Emperor Tiberius against the governors of distant provinces, this expression was full of terror to Pilate, who was conscious of acts in his government which would not bear examination, if the Jews should be so far influenced against him as to denounce him to the emperor. Regard for his own personal safety prevailed over every higher consideration, and he sought to suppress the loud voice of conscience within. He ascended the judgment-seat, and, causing Jesus once more to be led out before the palace, said sarcastically, "Behold your king!" Then arose the rabid cry of "Crucify him! crucify him!" But Pilate asked, "Shall I crucify your king?" To which the Jews, who had in fact no desire more intense than to separate themselves from the Romans, answered by hypocritically pretending the utmost attachment to them: "We have no king but Cæsar." Still torn between the reproofs of his conscience and the fear of man, the governor sought to allay the former by calling for water in which he washed his hands before the multitude, intending by this symbolical act to express that he wished to have no part in this unrighteous condemnation: "I am innocent," he said, "of the blood of this righteous person: see ye to it." With one voice they answered, "His blood be on us and on our children!"—a most fatal imprecation, and most dreadfully fulfilled upon them at the siege and destruction of Jerusalem.

The struggle was now over; the deep malice of the many had prevailed, and the judge had abandoned the Redeemer to their rage, while believing him to be innocent. The place of execution was near the city. In other cases it was not usual among the Jews to carry into effect sentences of execution immediately after they were pronounced; but in this case the popular madness would suffer no procrastination. Having been condemned by the Roman tribunal, the execution itself took place after the Roman manner, and by the hands of Roman soldiers. Under the Jewish law the death would have been by stoning, but Jesus himself had long before predicted that the lingering torture of crucifixion was the death appointed for him.

Among the Romans it was common for the condemned to carry their own cross to the place of execution. Jesus carried his through the city itself; but having been exhausted by his previous sufferings, when he arrived at the gate the soldiers placed the cross upon a certain Jew of Cyrene, named Simon, who had probably manifested some sympathy for Christ, and who with his family was attached to him. As the sad procession thus moved on, it was followed by a large number of people, particularly women, who, in the fulness of their sympathy, wept and lamented for him greatly. Touched by their grief, the Saviour turned and said to them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children!" which he said in reference to the calamities which, as he had already declared, were to befall the city and nation before that generation had passed away.

On arriving at a place called Calvary, otherwise Golgotha ("skull-place"), the cross was planted in the earth. The form of the cross and the mode of execution upon it are too well, and in the main correctly, known from paintings to require particular description. It may suffice to mention that the cross consisted of a piece of wood erected perpendicularly, and intersected by another at right angles near the top, so as to resemble the letter T. There is no mention in ancient writers of anything on which the feet of the crucified person rested; but near the middle of the perpendicular beam there projected a piece of wood, on which he partly sat, and which served as a support to the body, the weight of which might otherwise have torn the hands from the nails driven through them. The naked victim was first elevated to this small projection, and the hands were then tied with a rope to the transverse beam, and nailed through the palm. The feet were then nailed to the perpendicular beam, not, as some allege, by one nail through both feet, but by two nails or spikes being driven one through each foot.

Thus was he "who was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities" treated: thus did he suffer upon whom was the "chastisement of our peace."

The Romans were in the habit of affixing to all criminals a roll containing a record of the crimes for which they were punished, which was by them denominated *titulus* (title). Pilate manifested his sarcastic contempt of the Jews by causing the title upon the cross of Jesus to bear the inscription of "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS," in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Sorely annoyed at this, the Jews endeavoured to get it altered to "Jesus of Nazareth, who said, I am the King of the Jews;" but the governor seems to have found enjoyment in their mortification, and sent them away with the answer, "What I have written I have written."

Those who were condemned to the cross were crucified naked; and their clothes always became the portion of the soldiers to whom the completion of the punishment was intrusted.

It would appear that our Lord's Crucifixion was performed by four soldiers, and they divided his clothes among them; but finding the outer garment woven of one piece, and consequently without seam, they cast lots for the possession of it, thus unwittingly fulfilling a prophecy of David in one of the Messianic Psalms (xxii. 19):—"They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots."

Many Jewish women, who had attached themselves to Christ as his disciples, and had followed him from Galilee, were now, in this hour of agony, assembled around the cross of their beloved teacher. Among them were the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, the sisters of Jesus's mother, the wife of Cleopes, and Salome, the mother of John the Evangelist



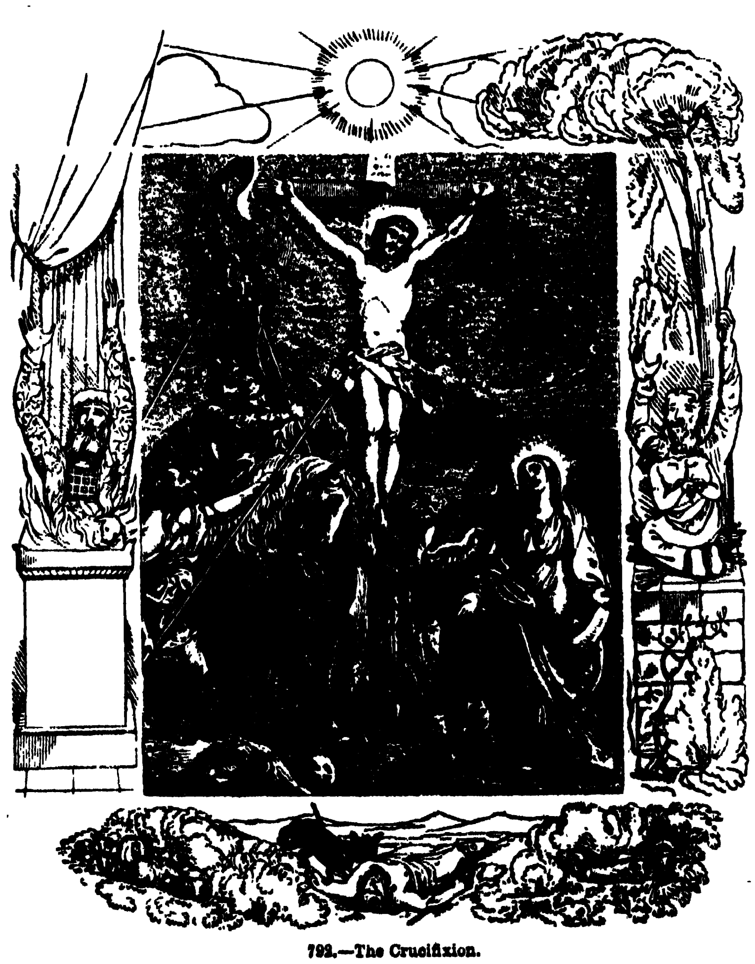
791.—Bearing the Cross.
Dwyn y Groes.



794.—Penitence.
Edifeirwch.



793.—Christ Crucified. (Guido.)
Crist Croeshoeliedig.



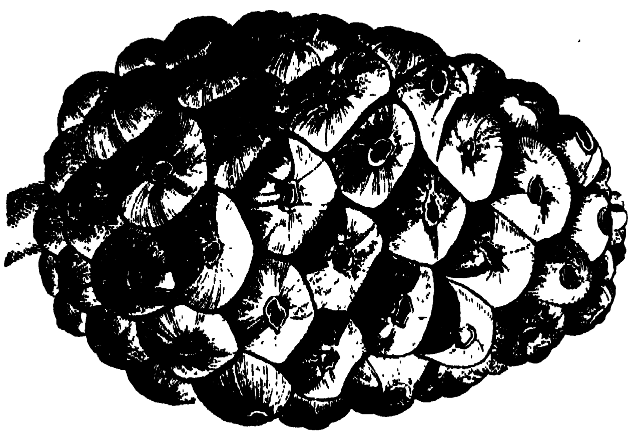
792.—The Crucifixion.
Y Croeshoeliad.



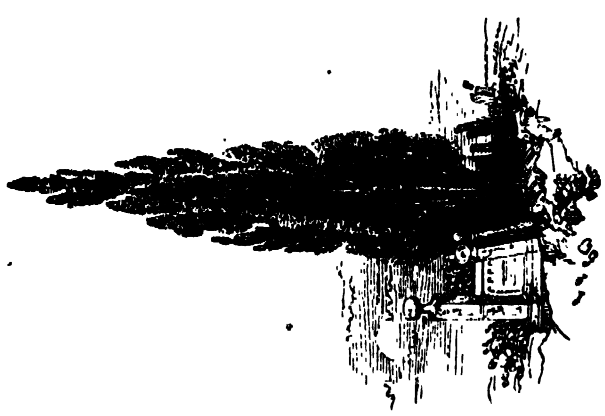
796.—Pinus pinea (stone pine).
Ffynidwydd.



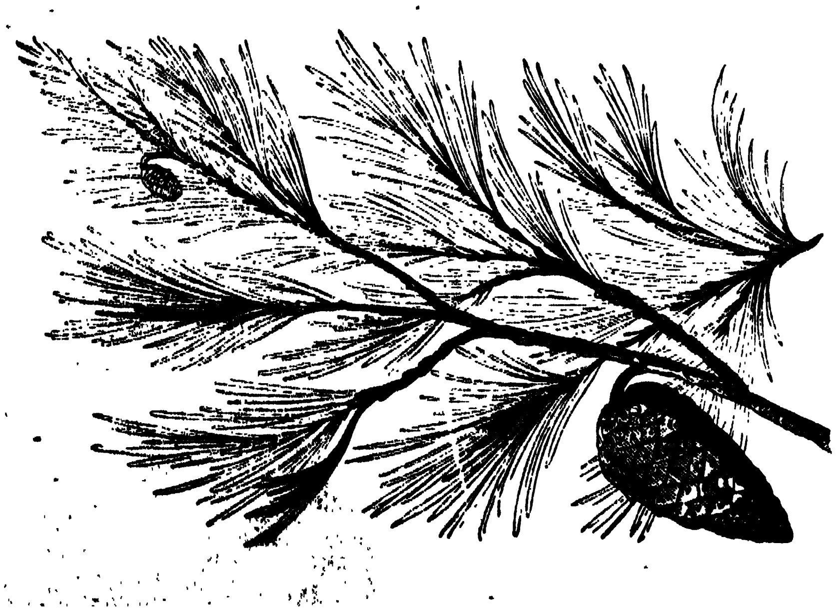
795.—Pinus sylvestris.
Ffynidwydd Gwyllt.



797.—Pinus pinea (stone pine).
Ffynidwydd.



798.—Cypress.
Cypreswydden.



799.—Pinus Halepensis. (Aleppo fir.)
Ffynidwydd Aleppo.



800.—Cedar.
Cedrwydd.

SUNDAY XXXII.—THE PROPHET EZEKIEL.

TYRE.

GREAT is the renown of Tyre, "whose merchants were princes, and whose traffickers were among the honourable of the earth." Its antiquity, manufactures, commerce, colonies, and its connection with remote nations unknown, or known but faintly, to the ancients, are all points of as high interest as any which former times can offer to modern investigation. The reader of the Bible has also his own peculiar interest in this city, from the frequency with which it is mentioned in the Sacred books, from the amicable relations which subsisted between the kings of Tyre and some of the greatest of the kings of Israel, from the remarkable results of these relations in the time of Solomon, and, more than all, from the prophecies of the overthrow of this great city, and the exact fulfilment which these prophecies have received. Ezekiel, in particular, devotes two entire chapters (xxvi., xxvii.) to this city, which have always been regarded as among the most remarkable documents which the ancient world has left to us. The first describes the future *history* of Tyre, which was afterwards accomplished to the very letter; the other gives a minute and most interesting account of the commerce of Tyre, and of the commodities—natural products and manufactures—which were brought by different nations to its great markets and fairs. Into the particulars contained in the first of these chapters we shall not enter, as all the attention we can afford to the subject will be sufficiently occupied by the latter of them.

In the celebrated 27th chapter, so valuable for the early history of national intercourse, we have a geographical view of commerce, so precise that one might almost fancy the prophet had a map of the world before him. It relates, in a particular manner, to the land trade of Tyre, at that time threatened with destruction by the military expeditions of Nebuchadnezzar. This sketch affords a most interesting picture of the international commerce of Inner Asia, which enlarges our narrow ideas of ancient trade by showing that it connected nearly all the countries of the world as then known.

The prophet, however, first disposes of the maritime commerce, in a brief but graphic sketch of the Phœnician shipping, leaving the employment of this shipping to be implied from its prominence in the account. It is not our intention to go through the whole of the details which the chapter, or which even this part of it, contains; but we may select some of the particulars as suitable subjects for remark or illustration.

In verse 5 the boards of the ships are described as being made of "fir-trees of Senir." Senir was the Phœnician name of that part of Mount Lebanon which the Hebrews called Mount Hermon. The wood of fir-trees does not now appear very suitable for building ships; but it might be very well suited for the ancient navigation, which was less daring, and needed not vessels of such strong build as those which the severer exigencies of modern navigation require. It is probable, however, that the prophet means to describe the decks of the Tyrian ships as being floored with fir, and in that case there is no longer the shade of a difficulty, as our own vessels are to this day floored with deal. As there are other Scriptural uses to which the wood of fir-trees was applied, such as the making of musical instruments (1 Sam. vi. 5), and, along with cedar, in the building of the Temple of Jerusalem, and of the palaces of David and Solomon, it is of some interest to know what species were employed. To this end we should inquire what fir-trees grow in Palestine and Lebanon. In Palestine itself there can be no expectation of finding fir-trees abundant; but in the hills of Bashan and Gilead they are common, and the species is the Scotch fir (*Pinus sylvestris*); at least this is the only species which has been named by travellers. Of the firs of Lebanon and the north of Syria we have not much information. Dr. Bowring gives a curious account of timber-cutting in the mountains from which the Tyrians obtained their supplies. Among the timbers he mentions "white and yellow pine, of lengths from one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet, and of dimensions, to take a square, of from twenty-four to twenty-five inches." He adds, that "the pine is mostly knotty, but very full of turpentine." This was in a part of the mountains where the trees are of large growth. In another part they are not above thirty feet long by about fifteen to sixteen inches in the square. These trees, so different in size, we may presume to have been of different species, and it may be regretted that they were not distinguished by Dr. Bowring. We know, however, that, besides the Scotch fir already mentioned, the Aleppo pine-tree (*Pinus Halepensis*), and the Stone pine-tree (*Pinus pinea*), are among the firs of Syria, and are probably comprehended among those mentioned in Scripture. The Aleppo species is a native of Syria, and was reared in this country from seeds obtained by Miller from the British consul at Aleppo. The Norway fir (*Pinus abies*), which Lady Callcott and others regard as the "fir" of Scripture, does not exist, and could not well be expected to exist, in Palestine or Lebanon.

It may be right to add that many biblical scholars suppose that the word translated "fir" really meant the cypress-tree. The Seventy translators of the Old Testament into Greek were of that opinion, and it would seem as if they ought to have had the means of knowing what the word signified. It is also certain that the cypress was employed anciently for most of the purposes which the Scripture specifies. Firs are, however, much more abundant in Syria than the cypress; and the question is altogether so nicely balanced, that it is difficult to say on which side the weight of evidence preponderates.

The prophet proceeds to inform us that the masts of the Phœnician vessels were of "cedar." After all that has been said to the contrary, we have no doubt in our mind that the tree now commonly called and well known in England as, the "cedar of Lebanon," is the *Eres* of the Hebrew writers. Indeed, the allusion of the Psalmist of spreading abroad like the *eres*, is, as every one knows, singularly applicable to the "cedar of Lebanon," which is remarkable for the wide spread of its branches, rather than for its height. Had Milton known this tree as we do, he would scarcely have spoken of its

"Insuperable height of loftiest shade."

But it had not in his time been introduced into this country, where we have now probably more cedars than are left in Lebanon. They were first raised from seed in the Botanical Garden at Chelsea, 1685; but it is not known if this was the first act of culture in England, or where or by whom they were introduced. It did not exist in the country in 1664, when Evelyn wrote his 'Sylva,' and it is very possible that the warm manner in which the tree is mentioned by this writer led to its introduction. He says that he had himself received cones and seeds from Lebanon, and knew not why cedars should not thrive in this country, but for want of industry and trial.

In Lebanon the most celebrated grove of cedars is near the village of Eden; and it is remarkable that Ezekiel, in another text (xxxi. 16), mentions the trees of Eden as the choicest in Lebanon. The inhabitants of the mountain devoutly believe that this is the grove from which Solomon drew the cedar wood for the Temple, and that the few large and ancient trees which still remain were in being in his time. They have also a superstitious notion that they cannot be counted, as every person gives a different number who sees them. This is a fact, however accounted for, as no two travellers agree in the number—probably from interpreting differently the term "largest" in counting them up. The native Christians of the mountain, every year upon the anniversary of the Transfiguration, perform mass upon a homely stone altar, reared under the most venerable of the trees.

With respect to the employment of cedar-trees for masts, this may be taken to imply the large size of the Tyrian ships; for we seldom read of their being used but in ships of unusual bulk. The Romans usually employed firs; but the enormous ship which conveyed the obelisk of the Vatican from Egypt to Rome had for her mast a very tall and large cedar, cut in the woods of Cyprus. The ship itself was sunk in the harbour of Ostia, by order of Caligula, to serve as a foundation for a pier and some towers. The main-mast in the galley of King Demetrius was also made of a cedar felled in Cyprus, one hundred and eighty feet long and eighteen in diameter.

The negotiations of the King of Tyre with David and Solomon, for the cutting down of the timber and the carriage of it when cut, teach us that at that period cedar was used generally, in the surrounding countries, in the construction of temples and palaces; as there is no appearance of anything out of the ordinary course of business in the agreement. Nothing could be fitter for the purpose required than cedar wood. Its size and straightness, and above all its durability, were most desirable for buildings that were to last. The beauty of the wood, the high polish of which it was susceptible, and its fragrance, also recommended it equally for the temple and the palace; and that for centuries it continued to be sought for such purposes, we find from Jeremiah's denunciation of woe to the rich, who built themselves houses with large rooms, and made wide their windows, and with ceilings of cedar, and painted with vermilion.

SUNDAY XXXII.—BIBLE HISTORY.

In his first appointment the new commander was employed against the rebel Sheba. David, aware of the importance of prompt and decisive measures, directed him to get an adequate force together in three days for this service. Amasa exceeded the time, probably from the partiality of the men for their old commander, and from their dislike to the leadership of one against whom they had lately fought. Annoyed at this delay, David directed Abishai, the brother of Joab, to take the field at once with the household troops, which were kept in constant service at Jerusalem. This he soon did, and Joab accompanied him as a volunteer. They were halting at Gibeon when Amasa joined them with his new levies, and at once assumed the command of the entire force. This was too much for the very small patience of Joab; who at once determined to rid himself of the man who had thus crossed his path. He set his sword loosely in its scabbard, in such a way that as he drew nigh to pay his respects to Amasa, it fell out upon the ground. He hastily took up the weapon and advanced with it naked in his hand, in so easy and natural a manner, that the slightest suspicion of his design crossed not the general's mind. But when Joab came up, he took hold of Amasa's beard to kiss it—a usual mark of respect—and in the same instant smote him through the body with his sword. He then immediately took the command, and hastened in pursuit of Sheba. He followed him through different tribes; and was joined by many of the men of Israel, who began to foresee the abortive result of this rebellion. Sheba was at length shut up in the city of Abel Beth-maachah; and the operations of Joab against the place soon assumed an aspect so formidable, that the inhabitants became alarmed, and, by throwing Sheba's head over the wall to Joab, put an end to the war, and to their own danger. As before this the rebel had been abandoned by the great body of his followers, the revolt of the tribes was understood to have ended, without any formal act of submission on their part, which it would have been imprudent to exact: and Joab returned to Jerusalem, retaining the command of the army, of which David dared not to dispossess him, or to call him to account for the murder of Amasa.

Towards the latter end of David's reign, the Philistines, who had frequently been vanquished, but not entirely subjugated, renewed the war against Israel; and gave David and his troops frequent opportunities of signalizing their valour. Several notable and chivalrous exploits are recorded. At one time the Philistines filled the valley which lay between the king's camp and Bethlehem; when a fit of longing seized the monarch for a drink of the water from the well near the gate of his native town. Instantly three heroic men hastened through all obstacles to gratify the wish of their beloved king. They forced their way through the Philistine host, and returned to lay at the feet of David their hard-earned prize. When David learned at what hazard it had been procured, it assumed in his eyes a character too costly and precious for common use, and, notwithstanding his eager thirst, he poured it out as a libation before Jehovah. In one of the engagements with the enemy, Abishai succeeded, at great personal hazard, in saving the king from imminent danger of being slain by Ishbi-benob, a son of Goliath, who, like his father, was of a most gigantic stature. So strong was the impression which the danger of the king on this occasion made upon "the men of David," that they vowed—"Thou shalt no more go out with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel."

In all the battles fought during this war the Philistines were defeated, until at length their strength was so utterly exhausted, that they were constrained to submit to the yoke of Israel. This subjugation of his old, his last, and his most inveterate enemies was not without an ill effect upon the mind of David. He became unduly elated with his successes, his power, and the extent of his dominion; and he conceived the idea of ascertaining, more accurately than he had yet done, the resources of his kingdom, and the number of the people capable of bearing arms, with an obvious view to larger operations and more extended conquests; and he gave orders to Joab to see this intention executed. In this his views were so obviously dictated by a miserable ambition, and were in such direct contravention to the Divine will concerning the chosen people, that even Joab was struck with dismay, and earnestly remonstrated against this undertaking, apprehending lest the Lord should not fail, by some signal infliction, to manifest his high displeasure thereat. But the king was inflexible, and Joab proceeded with great reluctance to execute the task imposed upon him, by first numbering the inhabitants of the country east of the Jordan. Thence they proceeded to the northern part of the land; and passing through all the districts west of the Jordan, they numbered all the men capable of bearing arms. They were found to amount to eight hundred thousand, exclusive of the tribe of Judah, which alone numbered five hundred thousand. When David received the account of these numbers, his eyes were suddenly opened to the enormity of his offence. "His heart smote him;" he was sensible that he had incurred the Divine displeasure, and implored most earnestly to be forgiven. In that very hour he was informed by the prophet Gad that the punishment which he so much dreaded lay at his door, and the only grace that could be allowed to him was the choice of three corrective punishments—seven years of famine, three months of defeat, or three days of pestilence. He chose the latter, piously observing that it was better to fall into the hands of God than those of man. Accordingly the Lord sent upon Israel a grievous pestilence, which destroyed not fewer than seventy thousand in different parts of the land. While this terrible destruction was still in progress, David, shocked beyond measure and deeply moved, interceded with vehement importunity for his people, and prayed that they might be spared, and the measure of the Divine wrath completed upon him and upon his house: his intercession prevailed, and the plague was stayed from Israel.

Not long after this event, the health of David began to break up, the infirmities of age grew fast upon him, and it became manifest that his days were drawing to their close. Under these circumstances the eldest surviving son of David, named Adonijah, deemed the time was come in which he might, without injury to his father, assert his claim of birth to the throne. He probably considered that it would be less difficult to contest the claim of Solomon now, when it had not been formally recognised by any of the authorities of the land, than it would be after the death of the king, and the actual accession of Solomon. That this conspiracy was considered not as being against the reigning king, but against the nominated successor, in favour of the natural heir, appears clearly from the time chosen, when the king was supposed to be on his death-bed; as well as from the fact that some of the most faithful servants and life-long adherents of David, such as Joab and Abiathar the high-priest, were among those who joined the party of Adonijah.

It was determined by the chief men engaged in this affair to publish the design at a grand entertainment which Adonijah was to give near the fountain of En-Rogel outside the city. To this entertainment all the king's sons—with the pointed exception of Solomon—were invited, as well as every person of influence who appeared likely to favour the enterprise. It was purposed that after the party had feasted and become warm with wine, the design should be opened, and that in the excitement of the moment Adonijah should be proclaimed as king.

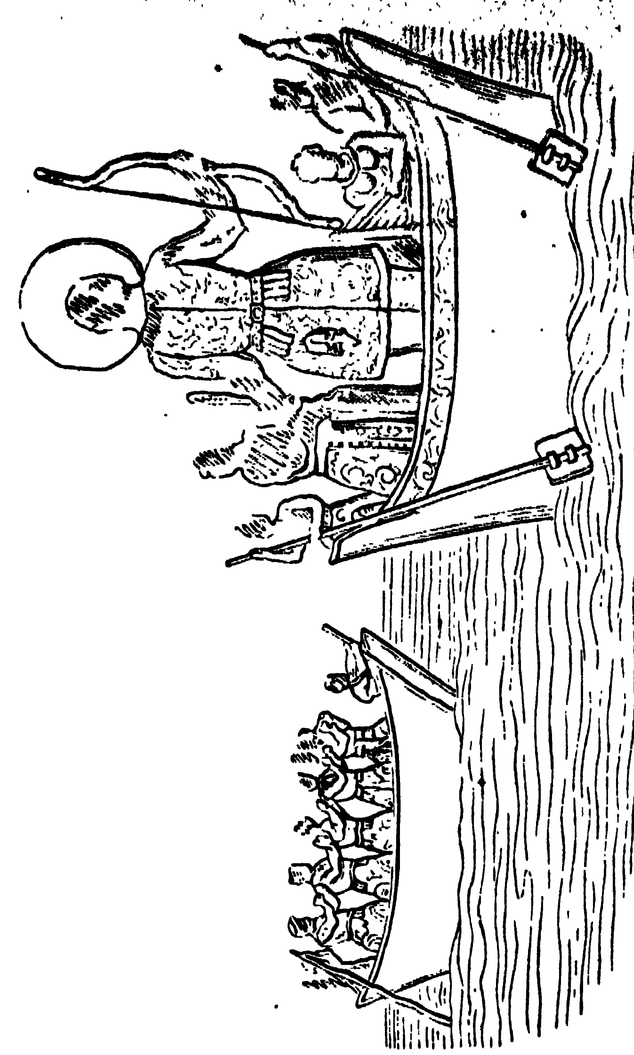
The plot, however, transpired in time to be frustrated. Nathan the prophet had notice of it, and at once acquainted Bathsheba with it, advising her to impart the intelligence to the king, and claim from him the performance of his promise that her son Solomon should reign. The king, feeble as he was, manifested every disposition to take prompt and decisive measures for giving effect to that Divine intention concerning Solomon which he had made his own. He resolved that he should ascend the throne at once, even in his own life-time; and in pursuance of this resolution he directed Zadok the priest to anoint Solomon as king of Israel, and to conduct him in procession, seated upon the king's own mule, through the city, proclaiming his accession to the throne by the special appointment of his father. This proclamation was received with great joy by the people, who followed in crowds, shouting "Long live King Solomon!" And "the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them."

This was evil tidings for the festive party at En-Rogel. All their high spirit fled in a moment, and every one thought first of his own safety. Adonijah himself hastened to the refuge of the altar, from which none but a murderer might be taken. When this was made known to Solomon—who was by that time seated on the throne, in high state, with all the court in attendance—he granted him a conditional pardon, requiring him to repair to his own house, and thenceforth lead a quiet and secluded life; but this was accompanied by a caution not to compromise himself a second time, as in that case his present attempt would be remembered against him. Unwilling to commence his reign with blood, Solomon took no present notice of the other parties implicated in this attempt.

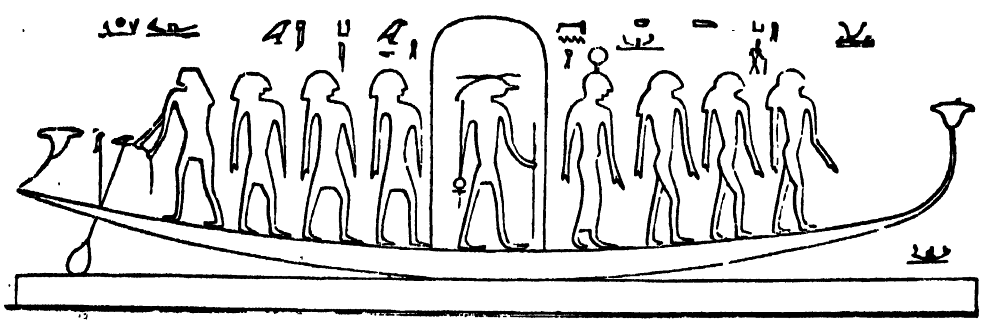
Not long after this, David, feeling his end rapidly approaching,



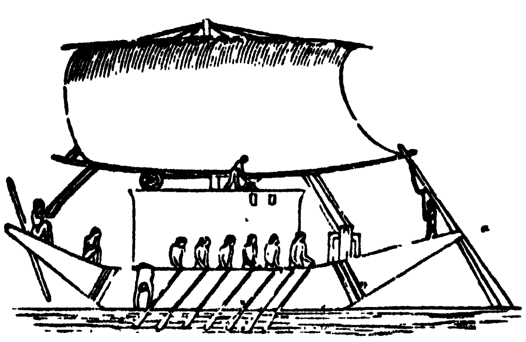
801.—"Thou hast given me the necks of mine enemies."—2 Sam. xxii. 41. (From Sculptures at Persepolis.)
"Rhoddaist hefyd i mi warau fy ngelynion." (O Gerfiadaeth yn Persepolis.)



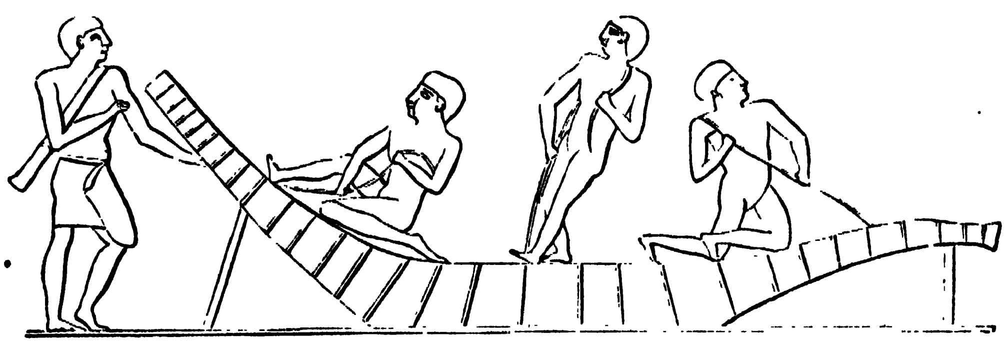
802.—Ancient Persian Boats. (From a Bas-relief at Tackt-i-Bostan.)
Hen Fadau Persiaidd. (O Safian yn Tackt-i-Bostan.)



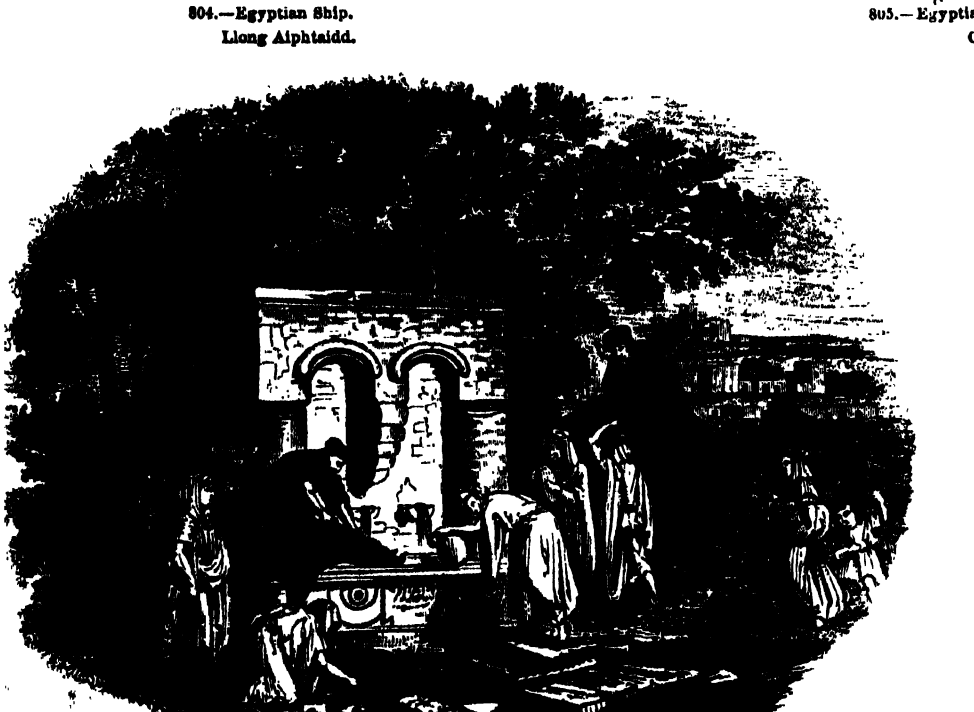
803.—Egyptian Boat. (From the Sarcophagus in British Museum.)
Badau Aiphtaidd. (O'r Sarcophagus yn yr Amgueddfa Frutanaidd.)



804.—Egyptian Ship.
Llong Aiphtaidd.



805.—Egyptian Swamp-Boat. (From a Sculpture representing the cutting of Papyrus.)
Corsfad Aiphtaidd. (O Gerfiadaeth yn darlunio toriad y Papyrus.)



807.—Well at Cana in Galilee. (Cassas.)
Pydew yn Cana Galilea.



806.—Coracle.
Corwgl.



810.—Modes of Salutation.
Dulliau o Gyfarch.



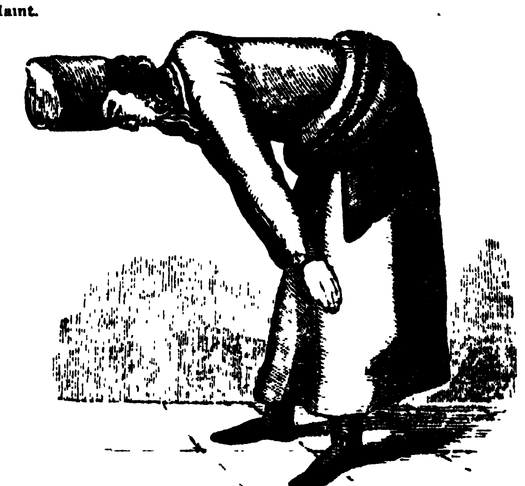
808.—The Plague. (Poussin.)
Yr Haint.



811.—Mode of Salutation.
Dull o Gyfarch.



809.—Castle near Teheran.
Castell yn agos i Teheran.



812.—Bowing before the King.
Ymgrymu ger bron y Brenin.



813.—Eastern forms of obeisance.
Dulliau Dwyreiniol o Ymostyngiad.



814.—David appointing Solomon to be his Successor, and the People making their offerings for the Temple. (Adapted from De la Hire.)
Dafydd yn appwyntio Solomon i fod yn Olynwr iddo, a'r Bobl yn cyflwyno eu hoffrymau at y Deml. (Wedi ei gyfaddasu o De la Hire.)

and anxious to ensure the future prosperity of his people and family, proceeded to deliver his last counsels to Solomon. He charged him above all things to serve and obey the Lord, and to regulate his conduct by the ordinances of the law, in order that he might prosper in all his enterprises. He also advised him to bring to their deserved punishment, which it had never been possible or prudent for him to inflict, Joab, stained with the murders of men eminent in Israel, and the foul-mouthed Shimei, who had treated the royal person with indignities which it might not be prudent to overlook.

Soon after this David died, at the age of seventy years, of which he had reigned forty, or seven years in Hebron over Judah, and thirty-three in Jerusalem over all Israel.

David must be regarded as the real founder of the Hebrew monarchy. In his conquests were accomplished the promises made to Abraham, and his reign prepared the way for the splendours of that of his son Solomon. He was among the greatest of those personages whom the Hebrew history celebrates, who took a leading part in the series of events precursory to the Gospel, and whose virtues, talents, and passions had a sensible influence upon the lot and destinies of the chosen people. The history of David presents few difficulties, but his conduct many: and there is not one of the Old Testament heroes who has found more panegyrists or more accusers. The former have painted him as one who could not fairly be judged by common rules of conduct, whose agitated life and ardent character excuse and account for all his weaknesses; whose zeal and faith hide all his iniquities; whose deceits are covered by their good intention; and whose adultery and murder must needs be overlooked in contemplating the beauty of his repentance. The others represent David as having been from the first the docile instrument and creature of Samuel; the able and accomplished, but unprincipled rival of Saul; brave, but cruel, sparing his enemies only upon calculation—because the safe time for destroying them was not come: perfidious ally of the confiding Achish; loose assassin of Uriah; unrighteous judge of the surviving descendants of Saul; a merciless conqueror to the vanquished nations; and, in fine, one who knew well how to make religion subservient to his own interests. Thus men have disputed about the reputation of David, as upon a dogma, and the exaggerations of fervid advocacy have on both sides been nearly equal. Even to the present day, the terrible reproach which Nathan addressed to the king is in course of operation and accomplishment:—"Thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme."

Yet the matter does not seem to be one in which the cause of truth or religion is really interested. The character of David is a question of history, and not of religion. The Bible recounts the good and evil of its historical characters, as would any other impartial record, without approving all that it records, without pausing to express a judgment upon every incident which it relates. On any other view than this, the historical books of Scripture are full of difficulties, but under this view all is easy and safe. In the Bible, as in the world, the history of which it contains, we find the tares represented as growing with the wheat; no human character, even in the Bible, is perfect; and we find only ONE who could say, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (John viii. 46).

If we take the Scriptural accounts in all their simplicity, we shall be guided to the truth, and prevented from condemning or justifying without discernment. In the case of David, much of the difficulty which has been supposed to stand in the way of a just estimate of character has been made to spring out of the celebrated text in which he is described as *a man after his own heart* (1 Sam. xiii. 14). This was said before David had been called into public life; and it might therefore be contended, if necessary, that it could apply only to, and only express approbation of, the conduct and character of David as it existed when the words were spoken, and before he had committed any of the offences which, under one view of his character, are laid to his charge. The justice of this limitation would be admitted in any other case, and why not in the case of David? But the admission is *not* necessary, and the terms of approbation may be satisfactorily explained, even if it be allowed that they had a prospective reference. In that case we should feel assured that the testimonial had regard to the public capacity, and not to the private life of David. A king not only lives, but reigns; is not only a man, but a sovereign;—and these two characters not only are separable, but often are separated in common histories. How often do we hear of a king, that his private life was bad, but that his public acts were good and tended to the benefit of his people; and how often do we hear of others, that although their public measures were bad, their conduct in private life was exemplary. Now, if this distinction is noted under ordinary circumstances, how much more does it not require attention in the case of a king over the chosen people? All the dispensations of which the descendants of Abraham were the object had no other end than to keep alive in the world the knowledge of the true God, until, in the fulness of time, a new order of things should be introduced by the Messiah. This grand design was in the most entire opposition to the idolatries which then overspread the earth, and to which the chosen people themselves were but too much addicted. Some of their best and highest characters—pontiffs, judges, kings, had at some time or other, or in some one or more acts of their lives, manifested idolatrous leanings. David alone, among the public men of the Hebrews, is *entirely* pure from this reproach. His acts are minutely described, but there is not one deed—his words are copiously recorded, but there is not one syllable—in which the slightest taint of idolatry or superstition can be traced. He suffered no stain of idolatry to exist in the land he governed. He even exercised the powers which rested in him for the purpose of re-organizing in some respects the ecclesiastical institutions of the Desert, in order to render them more suited for and acceptable to a flourishing, wealthy, and civilized people; and so admirable was the order which he established, that it was adopted with little, if any, change, under the second temple. In the tranquillity of Christianity, we find it difficult to understand the danger of idolatry which existed before the Gospel. This danger was great beyond calculation. But David did all that was humanly possible to discourage and resist it: and as in this vital matter the whole will of God was his rule of action, he would have been entitled to be distinguished as a man who, in his prime function, had acted according to the Divine intentions, which seems to be all that is meant when he is described as a man after (according to) God's own heart. Nor was he less worthy of this high distinction in his political capacity. No king of Israel ever so well understood his true position under the theocratical government. Most other kings affected, at some time or other, independent sovereignty. But David knew that Jehovah was the true king, and that the human monarch who had been conceded to the weakness of Israel, was no other than the accountable viceroy and vassal of the Supreme King. This sense of dependence he always expressed, he always acted on it, and was always solicitous that his people should understand it. Here also he acted, more than any other king ever did, according to the will of God, and in this capacity also—that is, in all his public capacity—might most fitly be described as a man after God's own heart. In this public capacity, surely, and in no other, is this phrase applied to him: and it may be observed that the text in which it occurs, and the repetitions of it, contain expressions which refer most pointedly to the regal character of David, as if on purpose to define the sense in which the phrase was to be understood. To make this clear we will here introduce them: To Saul, after an act which was criminal chiefly in *his* regal capacity, Samuel says, "The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, *because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee.*" Again, in Psalm lxxxix. 21, the Lord says, "I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant; *with my holy oil have I anointed him.*" In this passage the phrase "a man after God's own heart" is explained by "my servant." In Acts xiii. 22, the point is put even more plainly: "*He raised up unto them David to be their king*; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, 'I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after my own heart, *who shall fulfil all my will.*'"

In thus explaining the sense in which we believe these texts ought to be understood, we shall be humbly instrumental in relieving many sincere minds from the doubt and hesitation with which they have felt bound to speak of many acts of David's life which it is not very easy to vindicate or excuse. This, and not to investigate David's personal character, or to balance his particular acts, has been the object of these remarks. That character and those acts must be judged upon their own merits, but not without due and considerate reference to the times in which he lived, and to the very peculiar circumstances by which he was surrounded. Above all, let us read his conduct and character by the light of the Psalms, in which he opens up all his heart before God; and no one who has followed him in the struggles of the inner man, in his doubts, his fears, his sorrowings, his penitence, his self-abasement, his faith, his holy joys, his thanksgivings, and his triumphs—will feel disposed to judge him harshly, or form an unfavourable estimate of his character. He will rather experience in his own person something of that strange influence by which the handsome, valiant, accomplished, engaging, devout, and affectionate hero, mastered the hearts of all those among his contemporaries who were privileged to be near his person.

SUNDAY XXXII.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

CONSIDERATION of this last circumstance, the presence of John's own mother, will give an increased interest to the touching incident which followed. Although suffering under the burden of his own intensest anguish, and borne down with the feeling of the guilt of sinful humanity, the Redeemer had still an affectionate remembrance of those whom he left behind. He perceived the presence of John, the disciple who was honoured with his special attachment, and, referring to his own mother, Mary, he said to him, "Behold thy mother;" which was as much as to say, Be a son to her, even as to thine own mother now present. John understood him, and from that hour made his house the home of the bereaved Mary. From the circumstance that we find John at Jerusalem a long time after the Ascension, it would seem that he had a dwelling in that city; and the fact that he alone was personally known to the people connected with the high-priest, affords much corroboration to this conclusion.

Christ was now upon the cross, undergoing one of the severest deaths which the cruel ingenuities of men ever invented; and surely now the malice of his enemies was satiated? Scarcely so. Even on the cross he was exposed to their insults and mockeries. "They that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads and saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." The chief priests, with the scribes and elders, also repeated the bitter scoff at one who, after having delivered others, proved unable, as they supposed, to deliver himself. "He saved others, himself he cannot save." To all this, and even with regard to the sufferings and death to which they had brought him, Jesus only answered, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Christ suffered not alone: two robbers were crucified, one on each side of him. One of these two men, in the bitterness of his sufferings, railed at him, saying, "If thou be the Son of God, save thyself—and us." But his companion rebuked him, by reminding him that they were suffering the just penalty of their transgressions, whereas Jesus had been convicted of no wrong doing: and this man then said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." The sense in which the man made this wish may be doubted; but the Divine Saviour was touched by it, and answered it in that sense by which the suppliant might best realize the benefit he desired:—"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, *to-day* shalt thou be with me in Paradise!" We may be sure that, after that, this man's agonies fell lightly on him. What mattered the fleeting sufferings of noon, to one who, before the setting sun, was to taste the joys of Paradise?

By this time it was high noon, and Nature refused any longer to withhold her dread sympathies—the sympathies which man denied. Darkness overspread the land from that time till three o'clock, the ninth hour, when Christ, in the deepest feeling of the guilt of the human family, the punishment of whose sin he had taken upon himself, cried out, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?"

The conflict was soon ended, and Jesus called for something to revive him, in the words "I thirst;" which thirst has been shown to be the natural result of the manner in which this kind of capital punishment acted upon the physical system of those who underwent it. It was customary at the commencement of a crucifixion to offer spiced wine to those who were to be executed, for the purpose of stunning them, and of deadening their sensibilities. This the soldiers had offered to Christ, but he refused it, as he desired to go through these last sufferings with a clear and perfect consciousness. The soldiers had afterwards, in contemptuous sport, offered him sour wine to drink; and now a Jew, hearing his words, raised a sponge dipped in vinegar, on a hyssop stem, to his mouth. When Jesus had received this, he said, "IT IS FINISHED!"—the great work he came to do was accomplished; the dread penalties which he had incurred for the sins of men had been paid—ALL was finished; and "he bowed his head and gave up the ghost."

At that greatest event which had ever happened in the world of spirits, the irrepressible sympathies of Nature were again manifested. The earth trembled. And now, since the guilt of man was blotted out, and salvation was no longer a thing of promise, but a present possession, the curtain of rich tapestry which in the temple separated the sanctuary from the temple wall, was rent in twain, signifying that now, by the death of Christ, the human race were admitted to behold, without veil, the mysteries which had from the beginning of the world been hid with God.

Among the Romans the bodies of the crucified commonly hung upon the cross a considerable time, although in many cases they may have been given over to the friends of the deceased for the purpose of burial. But the Jewish law prescribed that criminals who were hanged up should be taken down on the same day. It was in particular deemed highly improper that the corpse of a criminal should be exposed to the eye upon a feast-day; and as, in this case, the Sabbath would commence at sunset, it became important that the bodies of those who had been crucified should be disposed of early. The soldiers, therefore, came to the crucified men in order to despatch them, for it was not usual to find them dead so soon. The two robbers were still alive, and their legs were broken with heavy blows to end their lives. But when they came to Jesus for the same purpose, they found that he was already dead, and forbore. Thus in the true Lamb of God was accomplished a fact typified in the Paschal Lamb, of which it was directed that "a bone of him should not be broken." A soldier, however, either to assure himself that he was indeed dead, or to destroy him in case there should still be life in him, thrust his spear into his side. Blood and water flowed from the wound, which seems to be mentioned by the Evangelist to show that he was already dead, and that if he had not been so, the wound would have sufficed to extinguish whatever remained of life.

It now became an object of solicitude to the disciples of Jesus that the body of their Divine Master should not be treated with disrespect. Among these disciples were several persons of consideration and influence; one of them, called Joseph, a native of the town of Arimathea (supposed to be the present Ramleh). He was one of those Jews who, like old Simeon, "waited for the kingdom of God;" and hence had a living desire for the commencement of the Messianic period, and had already enrolled himself among the disciples of Jesus. He was a member of the Sanhedrim, and, as we may be sure, one of those who, as elsewhere mentioned, had opposed the madness of that assembly. His rank among the Jews assured him attention from Pilate, to whom he forthwith applied that the body might be given up to him. Notwithstanding the hours which had passed since the commencement of the crucifixion, Pilate manifested some surprise at hearing that Jesus was already dead, and sent for the Centurion who had charge of the execution to assure himself of the fact. He then freely placed the corpse at the disposal of Joseph, without requiring the money which the greedy Roman governors usually exacted for such a favour.

As the Jews were very anxious in matters of sepulture, and desired beyond most things an honourable grave for those they loved, this concession must have been regarded with great triumph by Joseph and the other friends of himself and of the crucified Saviour, who awaited the result of his application. Among these was Nicodemus, another member of the Sanhedrim, and the same who had come to Jesus by night at the commencement of his ministry. He had provided a large quantity—not less than a hundred pounds weight—of myrrh and aloes; costly articles, in which the body might be laid, and which evinces at once the wealth of Nicodemus and his veneration for Christ. The body was then taken down from the cross and wrapped up in linen clothes with the spices; and as the time was but short, they hastened, without completing the operations usually observed on such occasions, to lay the corpse in the new sepulchre, hewn in a rock, which Joseph had prepared for himself in a garden belonging to him, which was hard by the place of crucifixion.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

I ask'd the heavens—"What foe to God hath done
 This unexampled deed?"—The heavens exclaim,
"'Twas man;—and we in horror snatch'd the sun
 From such a spectacle of guilt and shame."
I ask'd the sea;—the sea in fury boil'd,
 And answer'd with his voice of storms,—"'Twas man;—
My waves in panic at his crime recoil'd,
 Disclos'd the abyss,—and to the centre ran."
I asked the earth;—the earth replied aghast,
 "'Twas man;—and such strange pangs my bosom rent,
That still I groan and shudder at the past."
 To man, gay, smiling, thoughtless man, I went,
And ask'd him next;—*He* turn'd a scornful eye,
Shook his proud head, and deigned me no reply.

MONTGOMERY; *from the Italian.*



817.—The Resurrection. (Raffaelle.)
Yr Adgyfodiad.



816.—Entombment of Christ. (Raffaelle.)
Dodiad Crist yn y Bedd.



815.—Descent from the Cross. (Rubens.)
Y Disgyniad oddi ar y Groes.




818.—Psalm cxxxix.

LORD, thou hast searched me out, and known me.—1.

Psalm cxlii.

I cried unto the Lord with my voice; yea, even unto the Lord did I make my supplication.—1.



819.—Psalm cxl.



820.—Psalm cxli.



821.—Psalm cxlii.



822.—Psalm cxliii.




823.—Psalm cxliv.

LESSED be the Lord, my strength.—1.

That our garners may be full and plenteous with all manner of store: that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten-thousands in our streets.—13.

That our oxen may be strong to labour, that there be no decay; no leading into captivity, and no complaining in our streets.—14.



824.—Psalm cxlv.



825.—Psalm cxlvi.



826.—Psalm cxlvii.



827.—Psalm cxlviii.



828.—Psalm cxlix.



829.—Psalm cl.

SUNDAY XXXIII.—THE PSALMS.

HEBREW POETRY.

THE subject of Cognate Parallels is one of great interest, and we are reluctant to quit it without pointing out a remarkable form which occurs in the Psalms of Degrees. It consists in this, that the thought or expression of a preceding verse is resumed and carried forward in the next; for example, in Psalm cxxi. we read thus:—

"1. I lift mine eyes unto the hills,
From whence *cometh my help*.

2. *My help cometh* from Jehovah,
Who hath made heaven and earth.

3. He suffereth not my feet to be moved:
Thy keeper *slumbereth not*.

4. Lo, he *slumbereth not*, nor sleepeth,
The *keeper* of Israel.

5. *Jehovah* is thy *keeper;*
Jehovah the shade at thy right hand.

6. The sun shall not smite thee by day,
Nor the moon by night.

7. Jehovah *preserveth* thee from all evil,
Preserveth thy soul.

8. Jehovah *preserveth* thy going out and thy coming in,
From this time forth for evermore."

The same arrangement may be pointed out in the song of Deborah; and in Isa. xxvi. 5, 6, we read:—

"The lofty city hath *he laid low*,
Hath laid it low to the ground:
The foot hath trodden it down;
The feet of the poor, *the steps* of the needy."

The ANTITHETIC PARALLELS of Hebrew poetry are those which next offer themselves to our notice. In this species of parallelism two lines usually correspond with one another by an opposition of terms and sentiment; when the second is contrasted with the first, sometimes in expressions, sometimes in sense only. This is not confined to any particular form. Accordingly the degrees of antithesis are various; from an exact contraposition of word to word, singulars to singulars, and plurals to plurals, &c., through the whole sentence, down to a general disparity, with something of contrariety in the two propositions. Thus:—

"Faithful are the wounds of a friend;
But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy."
(Prov. xxvii. 6.)

"A wise son rejoiceth his father;
But a foolish son is the grief of his mother."
(Prov. x. 1.)

In which instance every word has its opposite; "father" and "mother," in the last, being relatively opposite. Of the same kind are the following:—

"The lip of truth shall be established for ever;
But a lying tongue is but for a moment."
(Prov. xii. 19.)

"The house of the wicked shall be overthrown;
But the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish."
(Prov. xiv. 11.)

Here the antithesis is very beautiful and effective. The most substantial structure, the *house* of the wicked, shall be thrown down; but the frailest tenement, the *tabernacle*, or shed, of the righteous, shall endure.

"The memory of the just is a blessing;
But the name of the wicked shall rot."
(Prov. x. 7.)

In this the general sense is antithetic, but there are only two precisely antithetic terms; for "memory" and "name" are synonymous.

The above examples are all taken from the book of Proverbs, where they abound; for this species of parallelism is admirably suited to adages, aphorisms, and detached sentences. Much indeed of the elegance, acuteness, and force of a great number of Solomon's wise sayings arise from this antithetic form, the opposition of sentiment and diction. We are not, therefore, to expect frequent instances of it in the other poems of the Old Testament; especially those which are elevated in the style and more connected in the parts. But although it is of comparatively rare occurrence, it is by no means inconsistent with the superior kinds of Hebrew poetry, nor are examples wanting in them. A beautiful instance occurs in Hannah's thanksgiving ode:—

"The bow of the mighty is broken;
And they that stumbled are girded with strength.
The full have hired themselves for bread,
And the hungry have ceased to hunger.
The barren also hath born seven;
And she who had many children hath become fruitless."
(1 Sam. ii. 4, 5.)

Also in some of the Psalms:—

"These in chariots, those on horses,
But we, in the name of Jehovah—will be strong:
They are bowed down and fallen;
But we are risen, and maintain ourselves firm."
(Ps. xx. 7, 8.)

"In whose eyes a vile person is contemned,
But he that feareth the Lord honoured:
Who swears to the wicked, and breaks not his oath."
(Ps. xv. 4.)

"For his anger endureth but a moment,
But his favour through life:
Weeping may endure for a night,
But joy cometh in the morning."
(Ps. xxx. 6.)

Even Isaiah sometimes makes use of this antithetic parallelism, by which, without departing from his usual dignity, he adds much to the beauty of his composition:—

"In a little anger have I forsaken thee;
But with great mercies will I receive thee again.
In a short wrath, I hid my face for a moment from thee;
But with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee"
(Isa. liv. 7, 8.)

"Behold, my servants shall eat,
But ye shall be famished;
Behold, my servants shall drink,
But ye shall be thirsty;
Behold, my servants shall rejoice,
But ye shall be confounded."
(Isa. lxv. 13.)

In this species of parallelism there are not only various degrees, but several varieties of form, which it may be useful to discriminate and to illustrate by examples.

1. There is sometimes a contraposition of parts in the same line, besides the opposition of the two lines, forming a kind of double antithesis:—

"There is that maketh himself rich,
Yet wanteth all things;
There is that maketh himself poor,
Yet hath great riches."
(Prov. xiii. 7.)

"I am swarthy, but comely, O daughters of Jerusalem;
As the tents of Kedar, as the pavilions of Solomon."
(Sol. Song, i. 5.)

The last line here is to be divided and separately applied to the preceding: "Swarthy as the tents of Kedar, comely as the pavilions of Solomon."

To this class belongs also the riddle of Samson:—

"Out of the eater came forth meat,
Out of the fierce came forth sweetness."
(Jud. xiv. 14.)

SUNDAY XXXIII.—BIBLE HISTORY.

SOLOMON was a mere youth when he ascended the throne of Israel. His age at that time is not well determined, but it could not have been more than twenty years. But he appears to have been well educated under the care of Nathan, and it is clear that his late father had much confidence in his abilities and his discretion.

The peace of Solomon's mind was first disturbed by a strange application from Adonijah, who desired to obtain in marriage a young female named Abishag, who had in the last years of David become his wife, but only so in name. Adonijah prevailed upon the unsuspecting good-nature of the king's mother, to intercede in this matter for him; Bathsheba, therefore, repaired to the hall of audience, and when the king beheld her, he rose respectfully from his throne and seated her on his right hand. Encouraged by this, she preferred the suit she had undertaken, but as soon as the king heard it his countenance darkened. He saw or seemed to see in this the germ of a new design upon the throne, conceiving that Adonijah only desired to possess Abishag in order to strengthen the claim which he intended thereafter to advance. He therefore ordered him to be slain, and in doing this let fall some expressions which alarmed both Joab and Abiathar for their own safety. Joab fled to the altar for refuge—which was a sort of acknowledgment that he deserved, or at least expected, to be put to death. The king neglected not the opportunity of ridding himself of so dangerous a person which this ill-considered step afforded. He sent Benaiah, the captain of the guard, to slay him, who went and summoned him from the altar in the king's name. But he refused to quit his refuge, and Solomon, with rare strength of mind in one so young, ordered Benaiah to fall upon him and slay him even at the altar. This was done, and the king, knowing the effect this death of a man so eminent in Israel was calculated to produce, took care to make it bear the aspect of a judicial punishment for the murders of Abner and Amasa. As for Abiathar, his life was spared in consideration of his sacred character; but he was deposed from the high-priesthood, which he had held jointly with Zadok, and commanded to withdraw into private life. These transactions reminded him of the only other person whom David had counselled him to watch—this was Shimei, whom Solomon sent for to Jerusalem, in which he enjoined him to reside in future, informing him that his life would be forfeited the day he went beyond its walls. He observed this obligation for three years, but was then tempted to quit the city in pursuit of two of his slaves, who had fled to Gath; and Solomon being informed of this, he was, on his return, put to death.

These executions, decisive, striking, and severe, at least showed the Israelites that the reins of power had fallen into no feeble hands; and this impression, coupled with the removal of these able and discontented men, doubtless tended in no small degree to give security to the throne of the new king.

Solomon very soon made it appear, by an imposing public act, that he intended to rule in the spirit of the Mosaical institutions, and in the fear of God. He convoked the tribes, their elders, chiefs, and judges, and, followed by his people, he repaired to Gibeon, where the altar and the tabernacle then stood, although the ark was in Jerusalem; and there, with great solemnity, he offered a thousand holocausts at one time. These first sacrifices were worthy of a king who was designed by Providence to give the utmost splendour of which it was capable to the ritual service established by Moses. His zeal was not without its instant reward. The Lord appeared to him in a dream, and required him to ask whatever favour or benefit his heart desired. The trial implied in this permission was most critical and awful—a youth full of the ardour proper to his age, only just become a king, offered whatever he desired. Solomon came gloriously through it. He asked wisdom; and that choice is the best proof that could be given of the wisdom he already possessed. The words in which this choice is announced, and the accompanying prayer, are most interesting, touching, and noble, and, under all the circumstances, form one of the most striking incidents in all ancient history. The king, in that beautiful outpouring of his heart, calls to mind the benefits which his father had received from the Almighty, and the continuance of the empire in his family, his own youth, his inexperience, the extent of his dominions, the multitude of his subjects; and he implored with ardour, as the highest and most precious boon he could receive, the wisdom necessary to enable him to govern well the chosen people of God. With a choice so sincere and humble the Lord was well pleased, and said, "Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life, nor riches, nor the life of thine enemies, but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment, behold, I have done according to thy words; lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast *not* asked, both riches and honour, so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days." The promise of long life was also added, on condition that he walked according to the divine statutes and ordinances.

Solomon awoke, and, fortified with these magnificent promises, returned with joy to Jerusalem, where, before the ark, he gave solemn thanks for the oracles received at Gibeon, and offered new sacrifices, and feasted all his court.

Next the sacred historian proceeds to produce a proof, in a remarkable scene of Oriental justice, of the sagacity with which Solomon was now endowed, and which made that fact known to his people from one end of the land to the other. In those times, as at present in the East, persons of the most obscure condition came to state their wrongs, to plead their causes, and maintain their rights and settle their disputes at the foot of the throne; and in the matters which are thus brought before the king for judgment, the humble condition of the parties is less considered than the difficulty of the points under litigation.

There were two women living together who had become mothers without being wives; but they loved not their children the less, and were not other than proud that they had become mothers in Israel. One of the children was overlaid, and died in the night; but the woman who found the child dead in her bed when she awoke, alleged that not this child, but the one that lived, was hers, and she charged the other woman with having transferred the dead child to her bed, and taken the living one to her own. The point at issue therefore was, to whom the living child belonged, for both claimed it, and, from the nature of the case, the claim of neither could be supported by evidence. Where there was nothing to go upon but the affirmation of the one party and the denial of another, the case seemed closed round with insuperable difficulties; but it occurred to the sagacious king that the natural feelings of a mother afforded a sure test by which the truth might be ascertained; he therefore called for a sword, and said with apparent solemnity, that as there seemed no other way of deciding between such conflicting evidence, he would divide the matter in dispute—the living child—and assign half of him to each. In this or any civilized country no one would suppose such a proposal sincere; it would have been too absurd and too barbarous for any one to imagine that it would be executed. But in the East decisions as arbitrary and eccentric as this are at the present day far from uncommon, and it is manifest that both the women fully believed that the king intended to give instant effect to this monstrous award. The king keenly watched the effect which his announcement produced. All the mother rose in the heart of the woman to whom the child belonged, and she cried out, "O, my lord the king, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it!" But the other cried, "Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it." Here the question was solved in a moment; no one could for a moment doubt which of them was the real mother, and the king said, "Give *her* the living child, and in no wise slay it—for *she* is the mother thereof!"

A proof of sagacity like this was well calculated to strike the popular mind, and probably made upon the Israelites a stronger impression of the king's wisdom than did all the parables, proverbs, and songs which he is said to have composed, or all the sage sayings which he is said to have uttered. "All Israel heard of the judgment which the king had judged; and they feared the king; for they saw that the wisdom of God was with him to do judgment."

The prosperity promised to Solomon was not less signal than his wisdom. He enjoyed during his reign profound peace, in consequence of the numerous victories which his father had achieved and the conquests which he had made, whereby his undisputed dominion extended from the border of Egypt to the Euphrates. His revenues from the tribute of the conquered nations alone, were therefore very great, and many nomade tribes, and nations not directly subject to his sway, found it prudent to obtain the protection and favour of so powerful a neighbour by paying annual tributes, which were ostensibly voluntary, and took the name of "presents," which seem to have consisted chiefly of vessels of gold and of silver, cloth, arms, aromatic drugs, horses, and mules. He also clearly perceived



830.—Crowns. (From a Persian Sculpture on the Face of the Rock at Tackt-i-Bostan.)
Coronau. (O Gerflun Persaidd ar wyneb Craig yn Tackt-i-Bostan.)



831.—Crowns. (From the Sculptures at Persepolis.)
Coronau. (O Gerfiun yn Persepolis.)



834. Mule. (T. Landseer.)
Mul.



832.—Modern Persian Crown.
Coron Bersiaidd Ddiweddar



833.—Procession of a Pasha of Egypt and his Great Officers of State, to illustrate the Proclamation of Solomon. (Cassas.)
Gorymdaith Pasha yr Aipht a phrif Swyddogion ei Lys, er egluro Cyhoeddiad Solomon.



836 —Sentence of J ' met t
Dedfrvd Barn



8.7 —Judgment of ~ mon (Rubens



835 —Solomon and Bath sheba (Ph l de Champaigne)
Solomon a Bath sheba.

that a well-organized government could not proceed without some regular sources of revenue, and he therefore appears to have imposed an easy tax upon his native subjects, which does not seem to have been regarded as a grievance until the latter end of his reign, when the increased expenses of the government and court, with the falling off of some other sources of income, constrained him to increase its amount. He also encouraged commerce, and made it a source of revenue; and it has been calculated that the various dues and customs paid by the merchants engaged in foreign trade, including probably the produce of the royal monopolies, afforded a yearly revenue of not less than five millions sterling. The principal monopoly was the trade with Egypt in horses, chariots, and linen yarn, which was managed by Solomon's factors, and which he was probably enabled to engross through the good understanding between him and the king of Egypt, whose daughter he married, and who, on account of her exalted birth, must have been his queen or principal wife. To this may be added the maritime traffic by the Red Sea, the proceeds of which were shared by Solomon and the king of Tyre. Such were the principal sources from which Solomon drew a magnificent revenue, which he as magnificently expended in his most imperial establishments. He had four thousand stables, in which were kept forty thousand horses, with a proportionate number of various kinds of carriages. He appointed twelve officers, to whom different districts were assigned, and whose duty it was to provide in monthly rotation the provisions required for the court; and some notion of the extent of the royal household may be obtained from the account which is given of the supply required for the consumption of one day:—Thirty measures of fine flour, threescore measures of meal, ten fat oxen, twenty out of the pastures, and a hundred sheep, together with harts, roebucks, deer, and fatted fowl. These provisions would suffice for several thousand persons, of whom we may therefore conceive the royal establishment to have been composed.

The people, prospering in an equal degree from the new sources of wealth opened to them, and from the exemption from war which enabled them to enjoy the produce of their grounds in safety, disregarded the protection of walled towns, and lived dispersed upon their own lands, enjoying their abundance upon the spot where it was produced. This is the prosperous condition of life which the Scripture so often describes by "every one sitting under his own vine and under his own fig-tree, and no one to make him afraid." Thus prosperous, and thus unwasted by war, the population of Israel also amazingly increased during the reign of Solomon, and were "as many as the sand which is by the sea-shore in multitude, eating, and drinking, and making merry."

All this could not be effected at once, but was the growth of years; and we have somewhat anticipated the order of events for the sake of a connected statement of the results of Solomon's system of government, and of the position which he was enabled to take on the demise of his father David. We may now return to trace the current of events.

Soon after Solomon's accession, Hiram, king of Tyre, who had been a great admirer and friend of David, sent an embassy to condole with the young king on his father's death and to congratulate him on his peaceable succession. Solomon gladly availed himself of this opening for an intercourse and connection with the Tyrian king, whose assistance would, he knew, be of great advantage to him in the undertakings he had then in view. He therefore sent to open to him the designs he entertained, and invited him to render the same sort of assistance which had been rendered to David when building his "house of cedars." Only the great forests of the Lebanon mountains could supply the timber required for the undertakings of the Hebrew king; and such of those forests as lay nearest the sea were in the hands of the Phœnicians, among whom timber was in such constant demand that they had acquired great and acknowledged skill in the felling of trees, and in the transportation of the trunks from the woods, in the heights of the mountains, to the sea-shore. Hence the assistance which Solomon required from the king of Tyre was of very great if not of essential importance to him. Hiram was found to be very ready to enter into his plans; and a treaty was soon completed, under which Hiram engaged to provide timber from the forests of Lebanon, for the temple and other buildings which Solomon contemplated, to convey it to the coast, and to float it down in the form of rafts to Joppa, the port of Jerusalem. Solomon himself was to provide a portion of the labour in the mountains; and he engaged to pay for the services of the Tyrians by a stipulated quantity of wheat and oil. By this undertaking both parties had what they most wanted—Solomon timber for building, which his own territory did not yield; and Hiram provisions, which the Phœnicians, confined to a narrow strip of land and devoted to trade and manufactures, were constrained to obtain from abroad, and could obtain with more convenience from the fertile inlying districts of Canaan than from any other quarter. Hiram's workmen assisted in preparing and squaring stones for the temple; and so numerous were the men—subjects of the two kings—employed in these preparations, that it required three thousand men to superintend their labours. Solomon, who had certainly a considerable leaning towards arbitrary power, being still in want of labourers, ventured to raise a levy of thirty thousand Israelites, whom he sent to assist the Phœnician timber-cutters in Lebanon,—not all at once, but in alternate bands of ten thousand each, so that each band returned home and rested two months out of three. This relief, and the sacred object of the service, probably prevented the opposition which the king might otherwise have encountered. For the more heavy labour in the quarries, Solomon called out the remnant of the Canaanites, probably with those foreigners (or their sons) who had been brought into the country as prisoners or slaves during the wars of David, who had, indeed, left an enumeration of all the adult males among them for this very purpose. Their number was one hundred and fifty-three thousand six hundred: and according to the common custom of the East in such cases, these also doubtless laboured in alternate bands. Such services were usually required from persons in their condition, when any great public work was in progress, and was not regarded as an oppression. Of these strangers seventy thousand were employed as porters to the others, and to the Phœnician artisans. They probably also had the heavy duty of transporting to Jerusalem the large stones, which sixty thousand more of them were employed in hewing and squaring in the quarries. Of these, the stones intended for the foundation were in immense blocks, and, as well as the others, were probably brought from no great distance, as quarries of very suitable stone are abundant in the neighbouring districts. These large stones were doubtless placed upon sledges and drawn by strings of oxen, after the manner indicated in the sculptured monuments of Egypt.

Solomon also desired that Phœnician artificers of all descriptions should be sent to Jerusalem, particularly such as excelled in the arts of design, and in the working of gold, silver, and other metals, as well as of precious stones; nor was he insensible of the value and beauty of those scarlet, purple, and other fine dyes, in the preparation and application of which the Tyrians excelled. Men skilled in all these branches of art were largely supplied by Hiram. He sent also a person of his own name, a Tyrian by birth, who seems to have been a second Bezaleel, for his abilities were so great, and his attainments so extensive and various, that he was skilled not only in the working of metals, but in all kinds of work in wood and stone, and even in embroidery, in tapestry, in dyes, and in the fabrication of all sorts of fine cloths. This man was a treasure to Solomon, who made him overseer not only of the men whom the king of Tyre then sent, and of those whom David had formerly engaged and retained in his service, but also of his own workmen.

Three years were consumed in these necessary preparations for building the temple, and it was not until the fourth year of Solomon's reign that all things were in sufficient forwardness to allow the foundations to be laid; and in about seven years after, the whole building was completed. So effective and well arranged were all the preparations, all the stones having been properly squared before they were brought to the spot, that the pile arose with little of the noise and confusion usually connected with the progress of so great an undertaking: we are indeed told that there was "neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard throughout the house while it was in building."

> "No workman's steel, no ponderous axes rung;
> Like some tall palm the noiseless fabric sprung."
>
> HEBER.

Various accounts of the Temple of Solomon have been furnished by writers of different countries and ages. The subject has been, indeed, so attractive, that entire volumes have been written on it. The result has, however, been far from satisfactory. The accounts have been framed from the description, which is itself not very easy to be understood, and which supplies so few facts, that much is left to be supplied by the imagination. Hence plans and descriptions have been produced bearing a most suspicious likeness to modern fabrics and styles of architecture, and which have manifestly been influenced in no small degree by the prevailing taste in the time and country to which the writer belonged. Thus, a view by a Spaniard will be very Spanish, by an Italian surprisingly Italian, and by a Frenchman wonderfully French.

SUNDAY XXXIII.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

THE body of the blessed Jesus being thus decently and even honourably deposited in the sepulchre, his enemies, the priests and Pharisees, finding that the corpse had been given up to his friends, called to mind the words of Christ concerning his rising from the dead: and in fear of the consequences which might ensue, they repaired to Pilate, requesting him to set a guard over the sepulchre to prevent the disciples from stealing away the body, and afterwards saying that their Lord had risen from the dead; "which last error," they said, "would be worse than the first." Pilate told them that they had a military guard at their disposal, and that they might, if they pleased, employ it on that service. The sepulchre being thus given up to their custody, they sealed up the door, that they might know if it had been opened; they then rolled a large stone to the entrance to render the opening difficult; and, to crown all, a guard of soldiers was set to watch and keep the sepulchre. Thus it was providentially ordered that the custody of the tomb should be in the hands of the bitterest enemies of Christ, who had brought him to an ignominious death, to render it impossible that they, or any doubters after them, should, with any show of reason, be able to allege that deception had been practised by the friends of Jesus.

The Sabbath passed with the usual observances, and then came the first day of the week, when the faithful disciples of Jesus could finish the decent observances towards the body of their crucified Lord, which on the Friday evening they had been constrained to leave incomplete. Many disciples were waiting for the morning, that they might hasten to the tomb; but, as usual in all cases where the finer feelings and inner sentiments are engaged, the women were foremost in their attentions and their cares. "Love," says good Bishop Hall, "is restless and fearless. In the dark of night these good women go to buy their spices, and ere the day break are gone from their own houses towards the tomb of Christ to bestow them. This sex is commonly fearful: it was much for them to walk alone in that unsafe season; yet, as despising all fears and dangers, they thus spent the night after their Sabbath. Might they have been allowed to buy their perfumes on the Sabbath, or to have visited that holy tomb sooner, can we think they would have stayed so long? Can we suppose that they would have cared more for the Sabbath than for the 'Lord of the Sabbath,' who now keeps his Sabbath in the grave? Sooner they could not come, later they would not, to present their last homage to their dead Saviour."

On the way to the garden, they talked of the difficulty of getting access to the tomb, on account of the stone at its mouth, which was far too great for their united strength to move.

The lively sorrow of Mary Magdalene led her, as they approached the sepulchre, to hurry on before the other women. She saw the great stone which had been placed at the mouth of the cave rolled aside, and the tomb open. Terrified at the sight, she hastened away to impart the tidings to the male disciples of Jesus. When the other women drew nigh, they also were astonished to find that the sepulchre was open. Tremblingly they ventured in and saw at once that the body of their Lord had disappeared. Much were they alarmed at this, and not less alarmed to perceive an angelic youth, vested all in white, who was seated on the right side of the tomb. On seeing him, they bowed their faces to the earth; and the angel said to them, "Be not affrighted: for I know that ye seek Jesus, who was crucified. Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen." He also reminded them how distinctly this had been foretold by Jesus himself; and after showing them the place where the Lord had lain, he enjoined them to go and declare these matters to Peter and the other disciples. They then hastened from the sepulchre "trembling and amazed," and hurried, with feet winged by joy, back to the city with their glad tidings.

And how had all these things come to pass, and what had become of the guard appointed to watch the tomb? There had been, at the first dawn of that morning, a great earthquake, in the midst of which the keepers of the tomb beheld an angel descend from heaven and roll back the stone from the door and seat himself thereon. "His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow; and through fear of him the keepers did shake and become as dead men." When they had sufficiently recovered, they sped away to the chief priests, and rendered an account of what they had seen. This at first confounded them; but a council having been called, it was concluded to give money to the soldiers to induce them to say that the disciples of Jesus had come and taken away the body of their Lord while they were asleep. This was accordingly the story which they thenceforth promulgated, and which, the Evangelist states, was "commonly reported among the Jews unto this day."

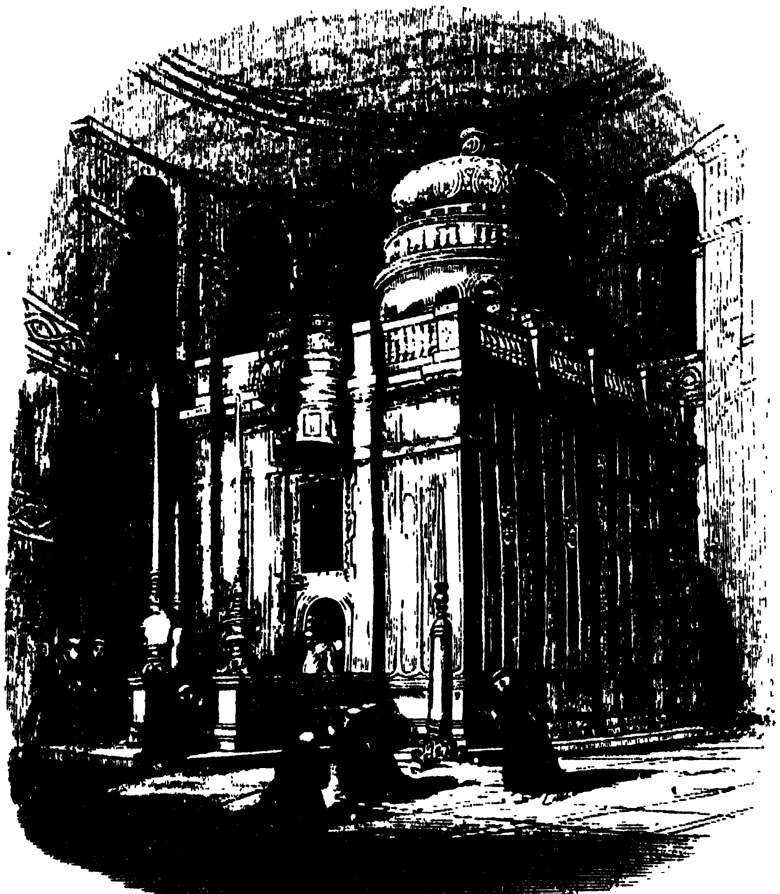
Meanwhile Mary Magdalene in her way to the city met with Peter and John, who were proceeding to the sepulchre. She, not having heard the communication of the angel to the other women, or indeed having seen the angel, eagerly stated what she herself inferred from the stone being rolled away, and the door being open:—"They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him." On hearing this, both the disciples began to run off to the sepulchre; and the enthusiasm of the "disciple whom Jesus loved" urged him on, so that he outran Peter and arrived first at the tomb. Stooping down at the entrance, he perceived that the body of his Lord was indeed absent, and that the grave-clothes in which he had been wrapped were left behind; but he went not into the tomb, being perhaps overcome by a natural aversion, or being unwilling to incur without reason the seven days' uncleanness which entrance into a tomb involved. By this time Peter also had come up, and being desirous of more exact information, went at once into the tomb, where he perceived that the napkin which had enveloped the head was not lying with the other linen clothes, but lay wrapped up by itself. On reporting this fact to his companion, John also went in to assure himself of it. From the importance attached to this circumstance, it would appear that they gathered from it that the body had not been stolen away. Had this been the case, the robbers would not first have carefully taken off the bandages, and have placed each one in a particular place: and hence it was natural for them to infer that he had risen from the dead. They therefore hastened away to impart these tidings to the other Apostles.

Mary Magdalene, who had turned back with them to the sepulchre, remained behind after they had departed. She had not been aware of this new evidence, perhaps from not having arrived at the garden till Peter and John had gone away; or being aware of it, she had not drawn from it the same conviction which it brought to them. Full of anxious solicitude, Mary looked once more into the sepulchre, and beheld two angels in white, sitting the one at the head and the other at the feet where the body of Jesus had lain. They said to her, "Woman, why weepest thou?" In the simplicity of her heart, she told them in plain words the cause of her grief, without immediately thinking on supernatural aid—"They have taken away my Lord," she said, "and I know not where they have laid him." When she had said this, a voice close behind her asked, "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" Taking the person who thus accosted her to be the gardener, and only half turning to him, she said in her usual simple and childlike manner, without any transport of fancy—"Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." On this the person to whom she had been speaking pronounced her name, "Mary!" in that dear and well remembered voice, whose accents had more than once brought peace to her soul. On hearing it, she responded, "Rabboni!" and turning quickly round, fell at the feet of her risen Lord. Imagining that she now beheld him in his higher being, she would have rendered him such homage as he had never yet received on earth; but he prevented her by intimating that his glorification was still future: "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father." He then sent her away to impart the fact of his resurrection to the Apostles, and make known to them that he intended to meet them in Galilee. This was the same commission which the other women had received from the angel, and they were earlier than Mary in their intelligence. The disciples received their account with a kind of doubting confidence, some believed less and some more; but as a body they were left in a state of mind to require further evidence of a fact so strange and unexampled.

The same evening, two men who had been disciples of Jesus, and whom many suppose to have been among the seventy, were returning to Emmaus, where they lived, from Jerusalem, where they had probably been attending the Passover. Emmaus was a small village distant about eight miles north-west of Jerusalem. On the way they were talking earnestly of the circumstances attending the death of Christ, and of the strange report which the women who went to the sepulchre had that morning brought to the disciples.



840.—Mary Magdalen and the Disciples at the Sepulchre. (Raffaelle.)
Mair Magdalen a'r Disgyblion wrth y Bedd.



841.—Holy Sepulchre.
Y Bedd Sanctaidd.



842.—Interior of the Holy Sepulchre. (Meyer.)
Y Tu mewn i'r Bedd Sanctaidd.



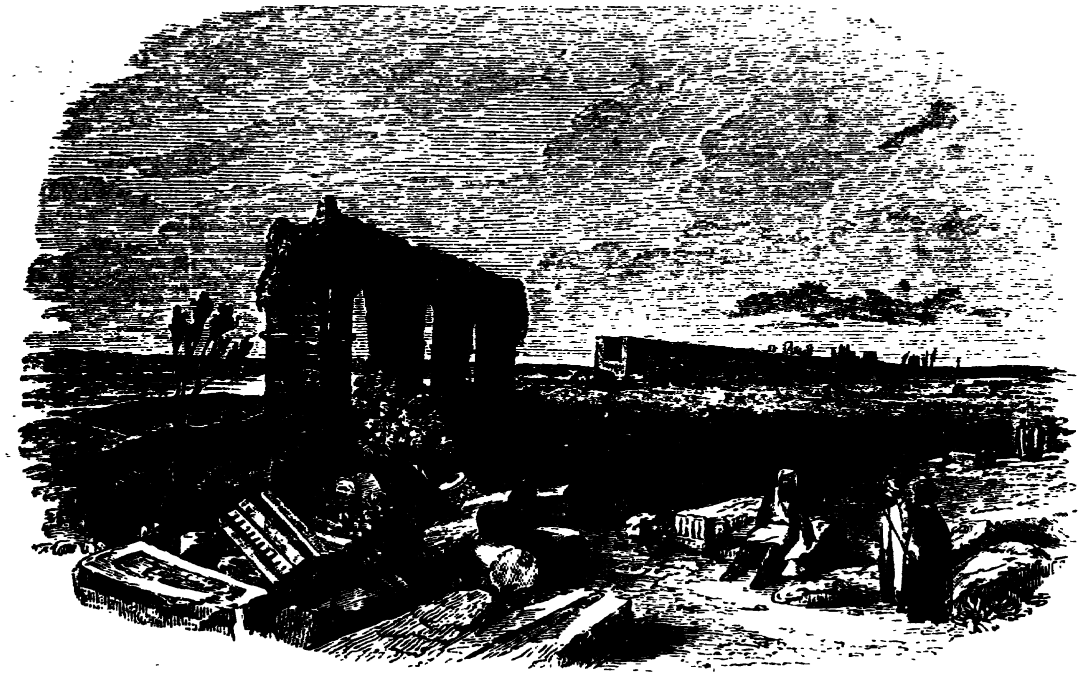
838.—Rama (Arimathea.)



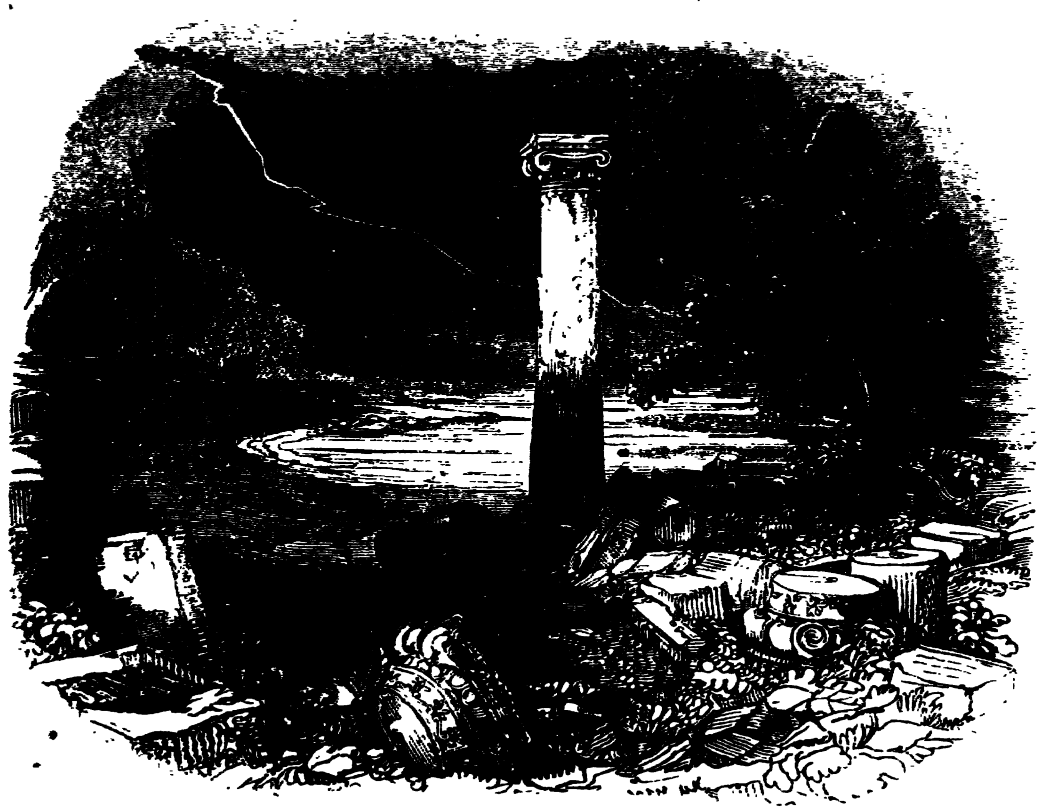
839.—The Resurrection. (Rubens.)
Yr Adgyfodiad.



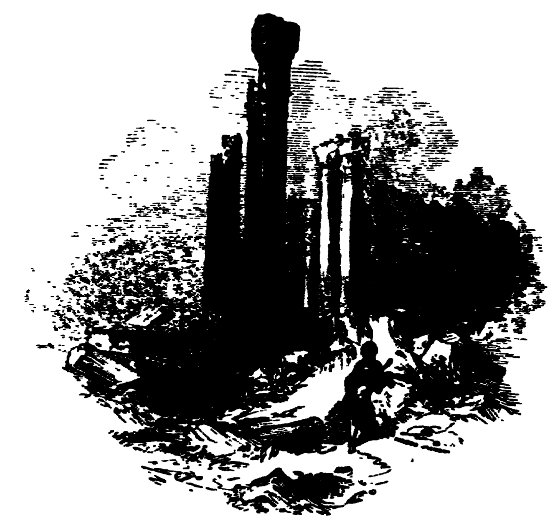
843.—Tyre.
Tyrus.



844.—Ruins of Tyre. (Cassas.)
Adfeilion Tyrus.



845.—Ruins on the Coast of Tyre. (Cassas.)
Adfeilion ar Oror Tyrus.



846.—Ruins.
Adfeilion.



847.—Desert.
Diffeithwch.

SUNDAY XXXIV.—THE PROPHET EZEKIEL.

TYRE.

THE ships of fir-trees, masted with cedars, are further described as being provided with oars made of the oaks of Bashan, which seems to show that the ships of Tyre were no other than galleys, designed to be propelled by rowers, as was the case with most of the more ancient shipping, the sails being only used as an assistance and relief to the oars, just as sails are now used in vessels mainly propelled by steam. With this impression agrees what follows—"the Ashurites have made thy benches of ivory," if these benches were those on which the rowers sat, as is usually supposed. If so, the Hebrew poet gives a lively idea of the magnificence of the Tyrian vessels, by describing the mean use to which so costly a material was applied. It is not, however, to be understood that these or any other benches were made wholly of ivory, but that they were inlaid and enriched with it. The ivory itself was doubtless the produce of their trade with India and Ethiopia, and, as manufactured by the Phœnicians into various ornaments and articles of taste, was extensively in use among the Israelites, especially in the furniture of royal residences (Compare 1 Kings x, 18; Psalms xlv. 8; Amos vi. 4). We see from the Egyptian monuments that ivory was abundant at remote times in Egypt, for in the processions of tribute-bearers we see crisp-headed bearers of huge teeth from Ethiopia and Central Africa, and white men similarly laden, who also bring ivory and the Asiatic Elephant, and who must have come from the East.

We are next told that the sails of these ships were of fine linen from Egypt; which is an interesting corroboration of our knowledge from other sources, that weaving was one of the principal occupations of the ancient Egyptians, and the products of their looms in great demand among the neighbouring nations.

The prophet then proceeds to enumerate the products which the merchants of various countries brought to the great mart of Tyre, and for which they received in exchange the merchandise and manufactures of the Phœnicians. We may notice some of the more interesting particulars which this list affords. The intercourse of Solomon with Tyre enables us to perceive the kind of commodities which the inhabitants of that state were likely to require from Palestine; and the account in Ezekiel perfectly corresponds with the intimations so long before conveyed:—"Judah and the land of Israel traded with thee; corn of Minnith, honey of raisins, oil and balm, gave they to thee for thy wares." The corn of Judea was in fact highly prized; it excelled even that of Egypt. It was not therefore merely the proximity of the country which led the Phœnicians to prefer this market. The other productions also mentioned by the prophet are among those which the Holy Land was famous for producing of a superior quality. The strong vine which had been native in this country from time immemorial, afforded them an abundance of delicious grapes. The "oil" of Palestine even still excels that of Provence, notwithstanding the depressed state of the culture under Turkish despotism. The "balm" was collected in the plain of Jericho and in the lands about the Lake of Gennesareth; and was of the same sort as that which still bears a high repute under the name of the balm of Mecca. The fact thus brought before us, that Palestine was the granary of the Phœnicians, explains in the clearest manner the good understanding which subsisted between those two nations. It is a striking feature in the Jewish history, that with the other nations around them they lived in a state of almost continual warfare; and that under David and Solomon they became conquerors and subdued considerable countries; and yet with their nearest neighbours, the Phœnicians, they were never engaged in hostilities. But if a sense of their weakness prevented them from attacking these mighty cities, the natural policy of the Phœnicians no less, on the other hand, restrained them from any hostile attempts upon a country from which they drew their subsistence: to which it may be added, that it seems to have been a maxim among them to avoid all wars and forcible extension of their dominion upon the continent of Asia.

What Palestine received from Tyre in exchange for its produce is not directly stated in Scripture. Solomon obtained timber from Lebanon: but after his buildings had been finished, timber could not well have formed the staple of the commercial intercourse between the countries. We may, however, with tolerable safety conclude that in this way the Israelites obtained such of the manufactures of the Phœnicians, and such of the commodities which they imported from foreign parts, as they required. We know that the Phœnicians excelled in the manufacture of ornaments of dress, implements, utensils, baubles, and gewgaws, for which they found a ready sale among the less civilized of the nations with which they had intercourse: and it is very likely that most of the ornaments worn by the Jewish women were obtained from them. A curious list of such articles appears in Isa. iii. 18—23.

Syria proper also supplied its various productions to the markets of Tyre, according to the nature of the different parts of the country. The prophet goes on to state:—"Damascus traded with thee on account of thy great riches and the multitude of thy wares; and brought thee wine from Helbon and wool from the wilderness" (xxvii. 18). The wine of Helbon (Chalybon), probably the modern Aleppo, was the best, or was at least reputed the best, that Asia afforded. It was the only sort which was served at the table of the Persian kings, whose custom it was only to admit to their tables the greatest delicacies that each province of their empire produced. An eminent German writer (Heeren) thinks it more than probable that wine in general was one of the most important commodities of the Phœnician trade by sea: for this he gives two reasons,—that the culture of the vine was not then naturalized either in Africa or the west of Europe; and that it could only be transported on land by waggons, and not on beasts of burden. We assent to the conclusion; but cannot concur in the last of these reasons, having very often witnessed the carriage of wine, in strong and well secured skins, upon beasts of burden.

"The wool of the wilderness," translated "white wool" in the authorized version, was one of the wares supplied by the pastoral tribes, who then, as now, wandered their flocks over the Syrian as well as the Arabian deserts. The fleece of these sheep is the finest known; improved as it is by the heat of the climate, the continual exposure to the open air, and the care that these people bestow upon their flocks, which constitute almost their only business—all which circumstances tend to render it more precious.

In the 13th verse, "Tubal and Meshech" are said to have brought to the markets of Tyre "slaves and vessels of brass." It seems to be agreed that the names Tubal and Meshech apply to the countries lying between the Black and Caspian Seas—the abode of the Tibarenians and Mosches, and probably also the Cappadocians. This probability is strengthened by the fact that the wares in question are exactly such as these regions produced. Cappadocia, together with the Caucasian districts, from the very earliest times was the chief seat of the slave-trade, and always continued so in the ancient world. The finest race of men has always been preferred: and it is well known that at the present day the harems of the princes and nobles of Turkey and Persia are peopled with the most beautiful of the Georgians and Circassians. Regular bands of kidnappers were formerly established throughout these countries, whose sole occupation was to surprise and carry away boys and girls for the markets of Constantinople, Cairo, and Teheran. The Russians have done all in their power to suppress this traffic in those parts of this region over which their power extends. But there are still Circassian dealers who trade with such of their countrymen as bring up *their own* children for the Egyptian and Turkish markets. This lot is not however regretted, but regarded as enviable by the females of those countries. The drudgery in which they spend their lives in their own land, makes the luxurious and easy life which their sisters are reported to lead in the harems of the Moslem grandees, seem to them most enviable; and cases are not unfrequent of girls who of their own free-will request to be sold. With the view of securing compliance on the part of their relatives, they sometimes declare that they have taken an oath to fulfil this resolution, and the respect due to so sacred an obligation precludes any opposition from being offered to the determination of those who have voluntarily incurred it.

The speculating spirit of the Phœnicians soon found a way to those countries, and knew very well how to take advantage of the prevailing taste in this merchandise. Their commerce in this detestable branch of traffic was very extensive. The prophets bitterly reproaches them for dealing in boys and girls, even in those of their neighbours the Hebrews, and for selling them to the Greeks; and they predict that in punishment for this offence their own children should be sold to the Sabeans.

SUNDAY XXXIV.—BIBLE HISTORY.

NOW, the current descriptions of the temple have been given either by Biblical scholars who knew nothing of architecture, or by architects who knew nothing of Biblical scholarship; and who have, therefore, not been very competent to grasp the whole of a subject requiring a combination of attainments not often found in the same person.

Aware of these difficulties, the Editor of the Pictorial Bible was led to apprehend that more satisfactory results might be obtained by comparing the description left to us with temples existing at this day in Egypt, and which existed in or before the time of Solomon. The architecture of a great civilized country like Egypt must have had considerable influence upon that of the small states which were in its neighbourhood; and when we take into account the intercourse which Solomon established with that country, one of whose princesses became his wife, we may allow the greater force to this consideration, even without laying much stress upon the fact that the Israelites themselves were, from their long residence in Egypt, much imbued with Egyptian notions, especially in matters which lay beyond the range of the habits which they took with them to that country. It is true that Phœnicians are the only foreigners said to have been employed by Solomon, and that the chief master of the works was of that nation. It is, however, by no means certain that Egyptians were not also employed, although they are not directly mentioned: and, under all the circumstances, it appears more likely that they were employed than that they were not. Nor is the case altered much, were the Phœnicians alone in this matter, as it is usually understood that the higher architecture of the Phœnicians was formed on the model of that of Egypt. In any case, if we heard that a great temple existed in former times at a particular place, and had no other means of obtaining a general notion of it, we should naturally turn to the contemporary or earlier temples (if any existed) of the nearest country or region, to suggest such ideas respecting the general plan and arrangement as might enable us to connect the particulars of the description we desire to understand; and the propriety of doing this would be much confirmed if we found a general correspondence of parts, and if the existing temple enabled us to understand much of the description which had previously been obscure. On these views the writer above cited takes some pains to trace out this correspondence. He gives the ground-plan which was designed by Bernard Lamy from the description of Solomon's temple given in Scripture, and compares that with the ground-plan of the temple at Edfou in Egypt, showing the general correspondence of the parts, and that in the more important differences the Egyptian plan affords as much illustration to Scripture as that of Lamy. The elevation of this temple, in the ruined condition in which it now exists, conveys a good idea of the general arrangements of such buildings—the grand entrance to the whole fabric, the courts which lie between it and the temple itself, and the sanctuary, which usually, as in Solomon's temple, occupies but a small part of the whole area. Of this more holy and eminent part, what we are disposed to regard as a very striking illustration occurs in the temple in the isle of Elephantine; and the two pillars in front, supporting the entablature of the pronaos, may perhaps illustrate the use of the pillars of Solomon's temple, Jachin and Boaz, which have so much perplexed commentators, as well as of "the two pillars on which the house (temple) leaned," which Samson overthrew.

This way of viewing the temple of Solomon by the light which the monuments of Egypt offer, has enabled an architectural writer, Mr. Bardwell, in his work on "Temples," to give an interesting account of this celebrated structure: and as this is the only statement respecting Solomon's temple by a professional writer, we shall here introduce the substance of it, avoiding, however, as we do so, some trifling mistakes into which he appears to have fallen.

"With so much information before us at the present day, it is almost needless for me to assert that the Temple of Solomon was in the Egyptian style of architecture; a moment's reflection will convince every unbiassed mind that such must have been the case; since, although Greece had been colonized from Egypt nearly two hundred years before this, it is not at all likely, from the slow development of human improvement, that the style we call Greek had then superseded its Egyptian parent; and what is conclusive upon this point, as we shall soon see, is, the Temple of Solomon had not, in its proportions and details, anything in common with the temples of Greece. That the Jews had no peculiar style of their own, excepting so far as they were restricted from the use of figures of animals in decorations, is also probable; as, ever since they had settled in Canaan, four hundred years previous, they had been constantly engaged in the wars necessary to extend and conserve their newly acquired territory, and, consequently, had no opportunity of cultivating the fine arts. Besides, Solomon was in constant intercourse with the Pharaoh of his age, and married his daughter. Further, in no part of the world had temple architecture and the art of cutting and polishing stones ever arrived, before or since, to such perfection as in Egypt. The Tyrians, being at that time the great common carriers of the world, kept up an extensive commerce with Egypt. I therefore infer from this and the before-mentioned reasons, that the masons were Egyptian, and the stone all prepared, fitted, and finished by them before it was brought to Jerusalem; since, moreover, there is nothing mentioned about the expensiveness of any article but the stone, 'costly stones, even great stones, stones of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits.'

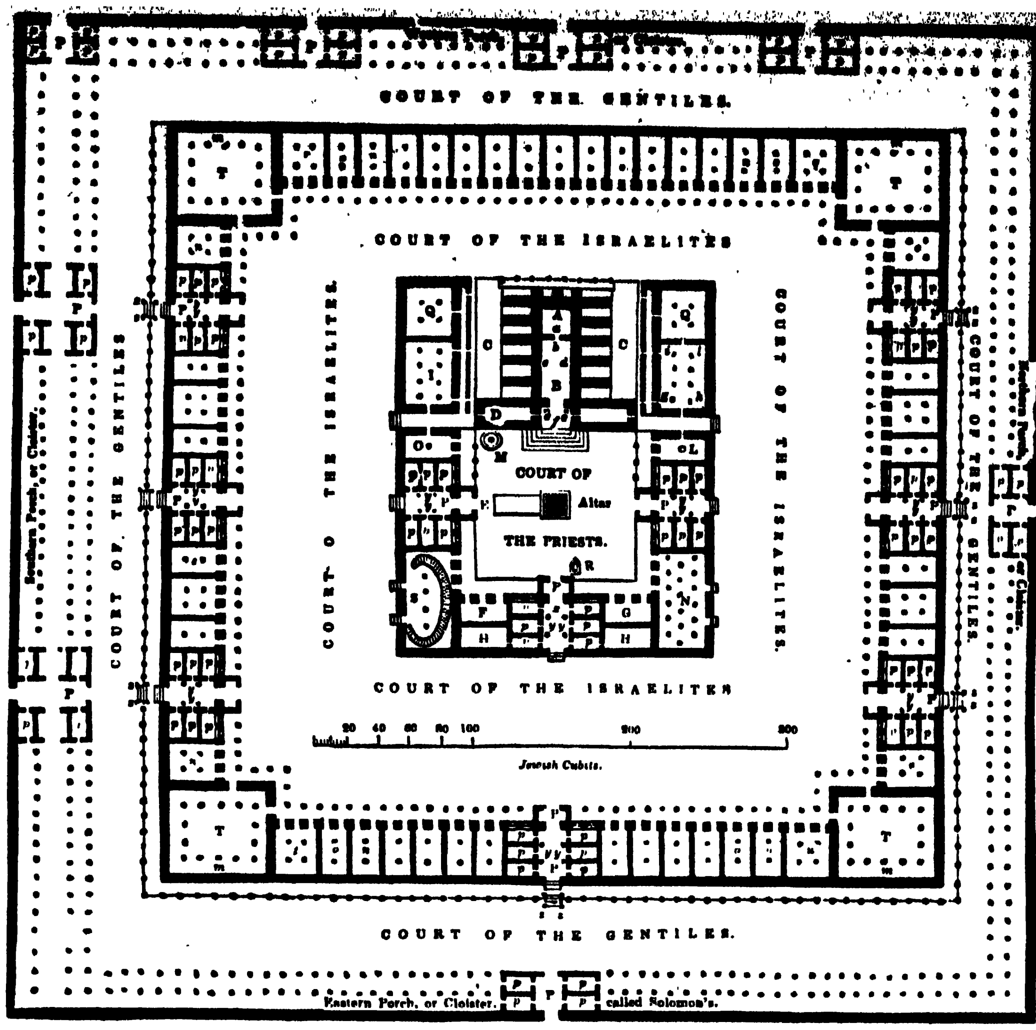
"The cella of the Temple of Solomon, as described in the First Book of Kings, was small, as all those of the Egyptian temples were; of few parts, but those noble and harmonious. It was about the same length, but not so wide, as St. Paul, Covent Garden; this church is a double square inside, the temple was a treble square, but one square was divided off for the oracle, and geometrical proportions thus established. It was one hundred and sixteen feet three inches long, to which must be added the pronaos, in the same way as that of St. Paul, Covent Garden, nineteen feet four inches and a half more; giving a total length of one hundred and thirty-five feet seven inches and a half long, by thirty-seven feet six inches broad, and fifty-eight feet one inch and a half high. It was surrounded on three sides by chambers in three stories, each story wider than the one below it, as the walls were narrowed or made thinner as they ascended, by sets-off of eleven inches on each side, which received the flooring-joists, as no cutting was on any account permitted. Access to these apartments was given from the right hand side of the interior of the temple, by a winding staircase of stone, such as may be seen in several of the ancient Nubian temples. A row of loop-hole windows above the chambers gave light to the cella. The oracle was an exact square, of thirty-seven feet six inches high, in the centre of which was a pair of folding doors of olive-wood, seven feet six inches wide, very richly carved with palm-trees, and open flowers, and cherubim; the floor of the temple was boarded with fir; the roof was flat, covered with gold, upon thick planks of cedar, supported by large cedar beams. The inside walls and the ceiling were lined with cedar, beautifully carved, representing cherubim and palm-trees, clusters of foliage and open flowers, among which the lotus was conspicuous; and the whole interior was overlaid with gold, so that neither wood nor stone was seen, and nothing met the eye but pure gold, either plain, as on the floor, or richly chased, and enriched with gems, upon the walls and ceiling. At a little distance from 'the most holy place,' like the railing of a communion-table, were fixed five massive gold candelabra, on each side the entrance, and between the candelabra were chains or wreaths of flowers, wrought in pure gold, separating even the entrance of the oracle from the body of the temple. Within the oracle was set the ancient 'ark of the covenant,' which had preceded them to the Promised Land, beneath two colossal cherubim, each nineteen feet four inches and a half high, with immense outspreading wings, one wing of each cherubim touching the other in the middle of the temple, while the other wings touched the wall on each side; before them was the altar of incense, formed of cedar, and entirely overlaid with refined gold; and on the sides of the temple were arranged ten golden tables, five on each side, for the exhibition of the shew-bread, besides other tables of silver, for the display of above one hundred gold vases of various patterns, and the censers, spoons, snuffers, &c. used in the service of the temple.

"It appears that the inside of the pronaos was also covered with gold; from it a grand pair of folding-doors, nine feet four inches and a half wide, opened into the temple. These doors were also overlaid with gold, embossed in rich patterns of cherubim, and palms, and open flowers; both pairs of doors had ornamented hinges of gold, and before the doors of the oracle hung a veil embroidered with cherubim, in blue, and purple, and crimson.

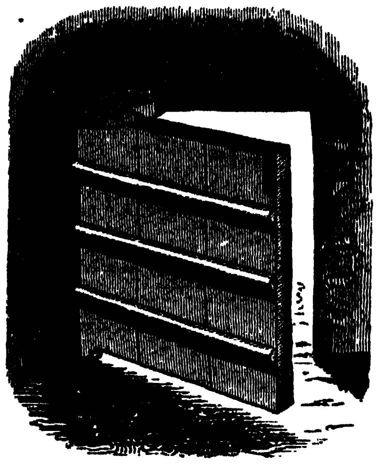
"Hiram the king had sent over from Tyre his clerk of the works, who superintended the building till it became necessary to set up the two great columns of the pronaos; these were to the usual pro-



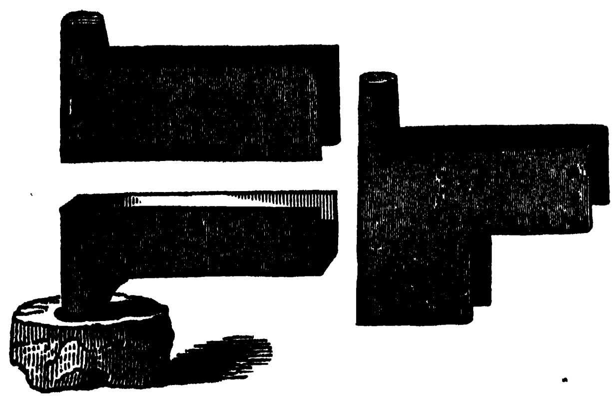
848.—Modes of bearing Burdens.
Y Dull o ddwyn Beichiau.



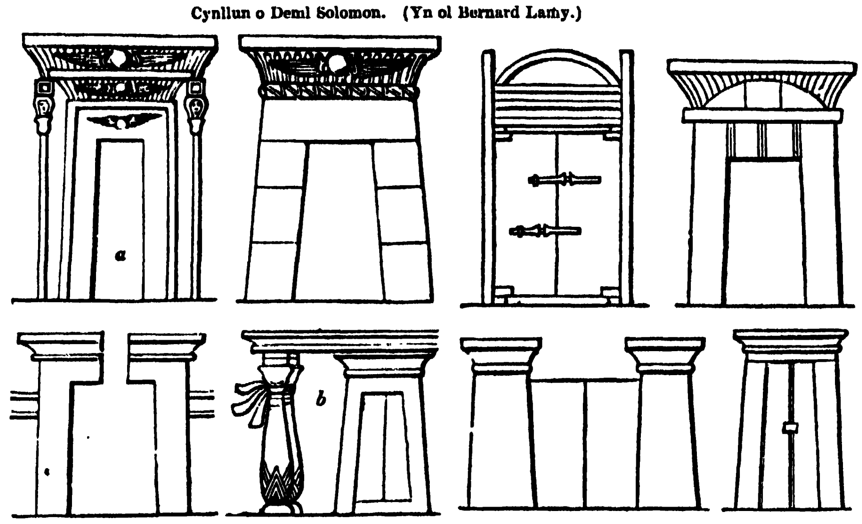
849.—Plan of Solomon's Temple. (After Bernard Lamy.)
Cynllun o Deml Solomon. (Yn ol Bernard Lamy.)



850.—Egyptian Door.
Dôr Aiphtaidd.



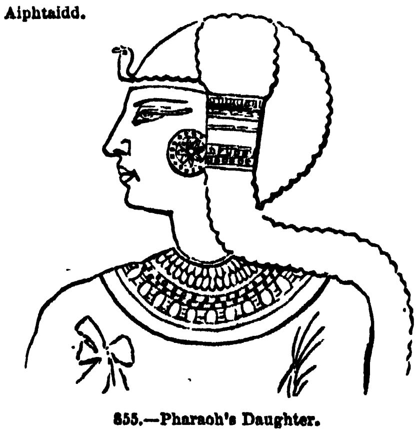
851.—Metal Door-Pins.
Bachau Dôr o Fettal.



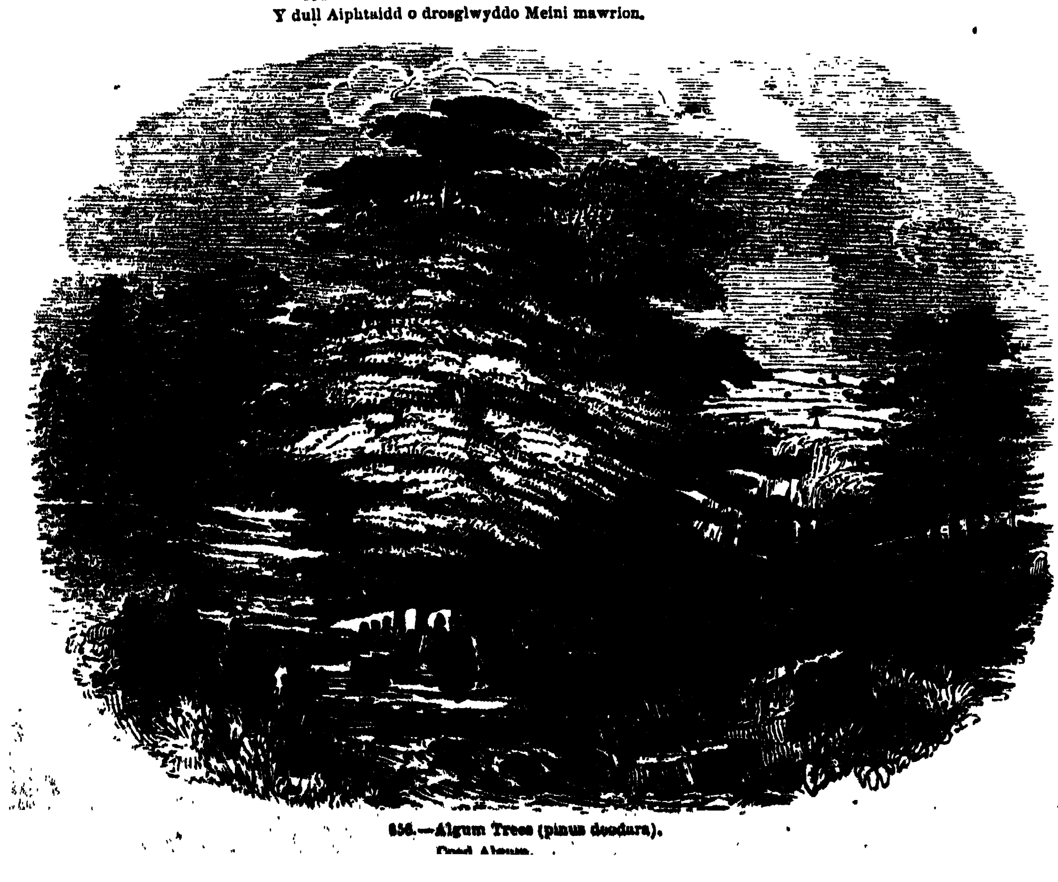
852.—Ancient Egyptian Doors.
Hen Ddorau Aiphtaidd.



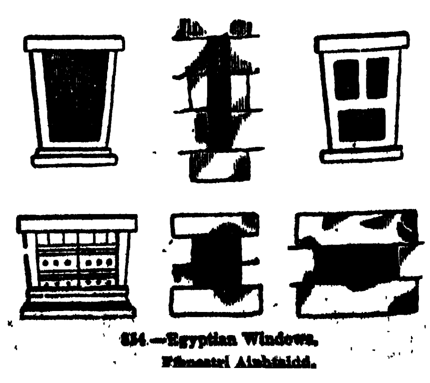
853.—Egyptian mode of transporting large Stones.
Y dull Aiphtaidd o drosglwyddo Meini mawrion.



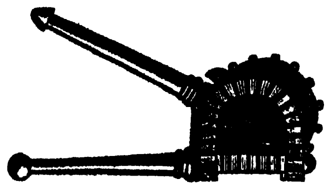
855.—Pharaoh's Daughter.
Merch Pharaoh.



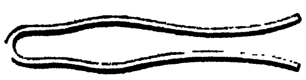
856.—Algum Trees (pinus deodara).
Coed Algum.



854.—Egyptian Windows.
Ffenestri Aiphtaidd.



858.—Snuffers.
Saltringau.



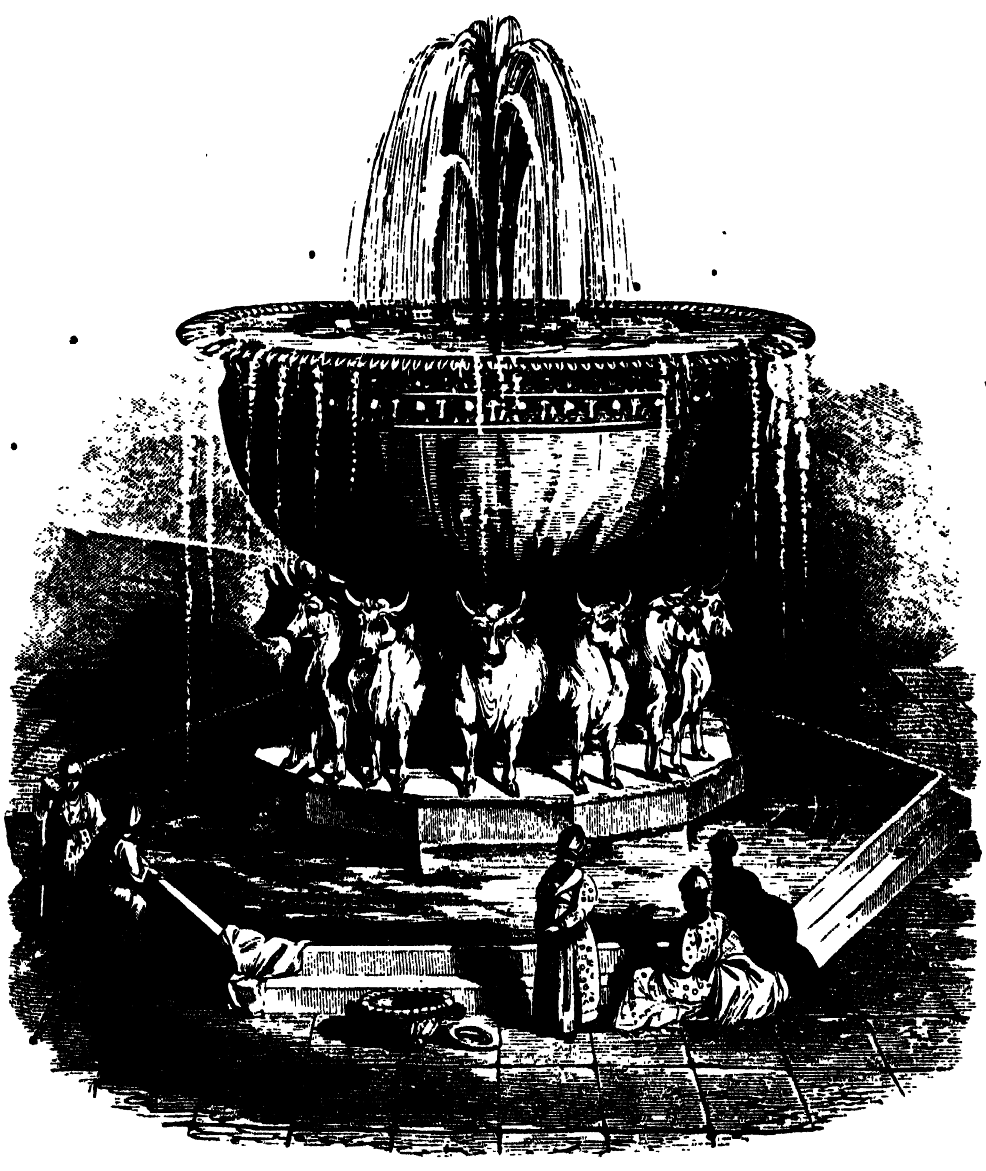
859.—Pincers.
Gefail.



857.—Cedars on Mount Lebanon. (From Laborde's 'Voyage en Orient.')
Cedrwydd ar Fynydd Libanus. (O 'Voyage en Oriente' Laborde.)



860.—Censers.
Thuserau.



861.—Supposed Form of the Brazen Sea. (After Bernard Lamy.)
Ffurf dybiedig y Môr Tawdd. (Yn ol Bernard Lamy.)

portions of Egyptian columns, being five and a half diameters high, and as these gave the great characteristic feature of the building, Solomon sent an embassy to fetch the architect from Tyre to superintend the moulding and casting of these columns, which were intended to be of brass: and observe how conspicuous is the idea of the vase (the 'bowl' of our translation) rising from a cylinder, ornamented with lotus-flowers; the bottom of the vase was partly hidden by the flowers, the belly of it was overlaid with net-work ornamented by seven wreaths, and beneath the lip of the vase were two rows of *pomegranates*, one hundred in each row: these superb pillars were eight feet in diameter, and forty feet high. The temple was surrounded on the north, south, and east by the inner or priests' court, which had a triple colonnade around it; and before the western front was the great court, square and very spacious, having in the midst the great brazen altar, as wide as the front of the temple itself, viz. thirty-seven feet six inches square; it contained also the magnificent basin called the Molten Sea, besides ten other lavatories, all of splendid workmanship in brass.

"The great court had three propylea with gates of brass, and was surrounded also with a triple colonnade."

Looking forward a little to the completion of the edifice, and its dedication by the king, our architect proceeds:—"Magnificent must have been the sight to behold the young king, clothed in royalty, officiating before the great altar, while the thousands of Levites and priests on the east side, habited in surplices, with harps, cymbals, and trumpets in their hands, led the eye to the beautiful pillars flanking the doors of the temple, now thrown open, and displaying the interior brilliantly lighted up, while the burnished gold of the floor, the ceiling, and the walls, with the precious gems with which they were enriched, reflecting the light on all sides, would completely overwhelm the imagination, were it not excited, by the view of the embroidered veil, to consider the awful glories of the most holy place."

After this description from the pen of an architect, it would be unfair to call the Temple of Solomon "a poor building," as some writers have done, under the impression that it owes all its greatness to the high terms which the Jewish writers employ in describing the most magnificent structure with which *they* were acquainted. The fact seems to be, that when viewed as the work of a very early age, and with reference to the notions which then prevailed, Solomon's Temple may be considered magnificent; although it is not to be compared with more recent specimens of architecture, as exhibited in the master-pieces of Greek or Roman art, or even in the great Cathedral churches of the Christian world. It is evident that the Jews knew nothing of the orders of architecture; and, although it may be difficult to form a distinct idea of this their first and greatest work, it is very clear that they were fond of minute details and highly finished decorations, both in the engravings on stones and the ornaments in wood and precious metals. If the expenditure of vast sums of money be taken as a standard of comparison, the preeminence of Solomon's Temple is more striking, as we have no knowledge of any building which has been recorded to have cost so much in its erection. There is, indeed, great difficulty in forming an exact estimate of this cost. Some find the amount so large as would have sufficed to build the temple with solid gold: and without going into such extravagance of estimate, but contenting ourselves with the lowest ever proposed, being seven millions sterling, it could not well have been otherwise than a glorious structure, however little its general proportions or arrangements of parts may have been in accordance with modern taste. The many thousand labourers employed on it for seven years and a half, is in accordance with the impression which we derive from the statement of the expense; and both facts together, even if nothing else were known, would amply suffice to relieve the Temple of Jerusalem from the slights which have of late years been cast upon it.

The fact seems to be, that our expectations have been too exclusively formed upon the vast single piles, suited to contain a multitude of people under cover, which have sprung up under the Christian religion, as being best suited to the forms of worship which it has established. Under the ancient idolatries, as well as in the Jewish religion, the worship of God was by sacrifices and other rites performed in the open air, within the enclosed courts in front of the small temple, which was not designed for the concourse of worshippers, but as the abode of the god, or the seat of his image. Thus in all these temples the vastness which struck the eye consisted only in their exterior buildings, their pillars, and the colonnades by which they were surrounded. The temples themselves, with their interior cella, were in general very small, and unimposing, so that they cannot be compared to a Gothic cathedral, in which, with its forty or fifty pillars, there is room for a man to lose himself. The things are so entirely different, that those whose ideas have been formed from the one, are not well able to appreciate the other. We concentrate our labours upon one imposing fabric—the ancients dispersed theirs in a multitude of connected parts over an extensive area. The different practices were respectively best suited to the modes of worship with which they were connected. This is clear: and it suffices at present to indicate that in the Temple of Jerusalem we recognise the general features common to all ancient temples—a holy place, inaccessible and inviolable, covered and shut up, and placed at the extremity of one or more courts, surrounded with peristyles, and with cells or apartments for the lodging of the officiating priests, as well as with places of store for the various property of the establishment.

The reader of the Scriptural descriptions of Solomon's Temple will be much struck by the unusual particularity with which the doors and windows are described. The valves, the side-posts, the "hinges" of the doors, are all specially indicated; yet no distinct impression is left upon the mind, and, to assist it, we have introduced examples of ancient Egyptian doors (Fig. 852), which will convey much instructive information on the subject. In two of them (*a*, *b*) may be seen further illustrations of the mode in which the two brazen pillars Jachin and Boaz might have been exhibited in front of the building, while those who prefer to regard them as standing apart in front of the porch may also find authority for their conclusion in the obelisks to which we have already referred. The word "hinges" used in our translation is apt to convey an erroneous impression with respect to the manner in which the valves of the temple-gates were hung. There were no hinges to ancient doors. They turned on pins, which among the ancients were frequently of metal (bronze), several of which have been found, and are preserved in various cabinets. Those which our cut exhibits (Fig. 851) are now in the British Museum; and such, without question, were the golden "hinges" to the door of Solomon's Temple. Sometimes, however, as in the specimen which we have taken from the model of a small Egyptian house in the same collection (Fig. 850), the pin was formed out of the projecting ends of the wood which formed the substance of the door, and this practice is still very usual in the East. (Fig. 854.)

The temple is said to have had "windows of narrow lights." What is really meant by the words thus translated is not very clear: but the specimens of Egyptian windows which we have given (Fig. 854), afford examples of all the alternatives which have been suggested, as well as illustrate the different kinds of windows mentioned in the Sacred Books.

As the utensils for the sacred service were similar in design and use to those employed in the tabernacle, it is not necessary here to describe those which were provided by Solomon for his temple. As, however, these services were henceforth to be conducted on a grander scale than under the tabernacle, the utensils were proportionably either more large or more splendid or more numerous. The most remarkable of the new utensils was the Molten Sea, which was destined to occupy the place of the brazen laver of the old tabernacle. It was cast of fine brass, a hand's breadth thick, and its border was wrought "like the brim of a cup, with lotus-flowers." It was so large as to contain about fifteen thousand gallons of water, and was mounted upon twelve brazen oxen, which must have given it a conspicuous and imposing appearance in the court of the temple, in which it stood. We are not acquainted with its precise form; but we have given one of the current representations (Fig. 861), to which we have added a more interesting illustration from the celebrated Fountain of Lions in the Moorish palace, the Alhambra, in Granada. (Fig. 870.) This fountain is said to have been designed in imitation of Solomon's brazen sea; but the difference of animals (lions, instead of oxen), and the absence of any inscription to that effect, render this statement somewhat doubtful. It is, however, the most proximate reality which can now be found, and is therefore calculated to furnish interesting materials for comparison.

With respect to the use of the figures of oxen, it is remarked in the 'Pictorial Palestine,' that "the instance proves—as do the figures of cherubim, so profusely displayed in all parts of the temple, and the brazen serpent in the wilderness—that the Hebrews were not forbidden to make images of living creatures, so long as they were not designed for any idolatrous or superstitious object. Had it been otherwise, nothing could well have been more suspicious and dangerous than the figures of oxen, considering the addiction of the Israelites to the worship of the ox-god of Egypt, as evinced by the golden figure of him which they set up in the wilderness, and by those which they in later days worshipped in Dan and Bethel."

SUNDAY XXXIV.—LIFE OF CHRIST.

THESE men, after the death of Christ, seem no longer to have regarded him as the Messiah; nor had they any faith in the relations of the women, though their minds had been so far struck with those relations, that they were, it seems, discussing their probability, and hesitating to give credence to them, since the disciples had not themselves seen Jesus. As they were thus communing together, they were joined by a stranger, who entered into conversation with them. This was Jesus himself. But, probably through divine influence in connection with the difference in his dress and the absence of any expectation of such a circumstance, he was not recognized by them. He asked them, "What manner of communications are these which ye have one to another as ye walk, and are sad?" In answer they expressed their surprise that any one coming from Jerusalem could be ignorant of things which had for some days been the common talk of the holy city. Jesus still asked, "What things?" Then they briefly recited how that Jesus of Nazareth, "a prophet mighty in word and deed before God and all the people, had been delivered unto death by the chief priests and rulers;" and this put an end to the hopes which they and many others had cherished, for they had, they said, trusted that "this was he who should have delivered Israel." And besides this, some of their women had thrown them into amazement by asserting what seemed incredible—that they had been told by angels that Jesus was still alive. Then Christ broke forth, "O misjudging! and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Then beginning at Moses, and so down through all the prophets, he opened to them the Scriptures concerning himself, showing how the ancient purposes of God had been accomplished, and salvation brought to mankind by those very things which appeared to them so mysterious and dark.

By the time the Lord had ended his discourse, the party had arrived near Emmaus, when perceiving that the instructive companion of their walk made a motion as if intending to proceed farther, they urged him to accompany them to their home in the village, and remain with them for the night, as the day was drawing towards its close. He yielded to their friendly importunities, and went. What further passed until supper-time we know not; but at that meal the peculiar manner in which Jesus took and blessed the bread, and gave it to them—which besides was an unusual thing for a guest to do—revealed him to their knowledge. But before they could express their delight or reverence, he disappeared from their view. On this, although it was night, they girded up their loins and hastened back to Jerusalem, to make known to the Apostles that the Lord had indeed risen. On the way they had new and higher matter for discourse, and they said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and opened to us the Scriptures?" On their arrival at Jerusalem, they found the Apostles and chosen disciples of Christ assembled together, and already well assured, from the evidence of Peter, that their Lord had risen from the dead. While they were talking of these matters, Jesus himself appeared unexpectedly and suddenly among them, and saluted them in his usual manner—"Peace be unto you!" They were at first terrified at his appearance; for although they believed he was risen, the first appearance of one who had been dead, and had lain in the grave, suggested to their imagination the idea of a disembodied spirit. To disabuse them of this impression, he called their attention to the scars which the nails had left upon his hands and feet; and to feel that he still possessed a material body.

The Apostle Thomas was not present at the time, and when told by the others that they had seen the Lord, he immediately expressed a strong doubt of the fact. They assured him that they had seen the marks of his wounds; and he then declared, that he must not only see, but put his finger into the prints of the nails, and his hand into the wounded side, before he could believe. Eight days after, Jesus again appeared to the disciples, when Thomas was among them. He addressed himself directly to the incredulous apostle, saying, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." On this the rebuked apostle was seized with a full and overflowing feeling of the supernatural in the fact which his cool mind had been disposed to distrust, and with intense acknowledgment he exclaimed, "My Lord, and my God!"

After this, the apostles, who were all of Galilee, returned to their own province and to their friends, because Jesus had told them beforehand that they might there expect to hold further intercourse with him.

The apostles had then returned to their usual occupations; which does not, however, imply that they had abandoned the expectation of being employed in preaching the doctrine of Christ, since among the Jews the office of a teacher seldom excluded the prosecution of some trade, but, on the contrary, the two were frequently combined. Seven of the disciples, all fishermen, were by the Lake of Tiberias, and launched forth one evening to catch fish. They toiled all the night, and caught nothing. When the morning broke, Jesus stood upon the shore, but in the dusk of the morning the fishermen knew not their Master. He called to them, to ask if they had any fish. They still knew him not by his voice, but probably supposed him one who wished to purchase fish. They answered that they had none: on which he told them to cast their nets in on the right side of the ship, and they would find enough. Supposing that he might from the shore have observed something which led him to conclude that there were fish in that place, they followed the directions of the supposed stranger, and then they were unable to draw the net, from the multitude of fishes which it enclosed.

This miraculous draught immediately suggested to John that the stranger upon the shore was no other than the Lord, and he mentioned this to Peter, who no sooner heard it, than he cast himself into the sea, and swam to the land. The others came in their boat, dragging after them the net, which contained not fewer than one hundred and fifty large fishes, and, although there were so many, the net was not broken. On landing, the disciples found a fire already kindled, with fish broiling thereon, with bread provided for their refreshment, and after some of the fish just caught had been added, Jesus said to them, "Come and dine."

After he had assured their minds, by this act of confidential intercourse, Christ addressed himself in a very pointed manner to Peter, who must be supposed in a peculiar state of mind with reference to the recent denial of his Lord, and asked him whether he now, according to his former declaration, loved him with more entire devotedness than others, in the words, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" Peter dared not again make a bold promise. He mistrusted his own knowledge of himself, and answered only by a touching appeal to the consciousness of Christ—"Yea, Lord, *thou knowest* that I love thee." Then Christ called upon him to prove his words by his actions, in the emphatic words, "Feed my lambs!" After a while Jesus repeated the question, and having received the same answer, charged him—"Feed my sheep." Once more he pronounced the question; and although Peter was distressed at the doubt implied in the repetition of the question, the feeling of inward attachment was now so strong within him, that he appealed with entire confidence to the high knowledge of the heart which his Divine Master possessed: "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." To this Christ repeated the same significant charge; and then at once proceeded to apprise him, in language not to be mistaken, of the testimony of love to Christ which would thereafter, in his old age, be required from him, by the violent death on the cross which he would then be called upon to suffer.

John, who had always been present at confidential conversations, also joined them here. Peter, actuated more by idle curiosity than by real solicitude for John, was led by this to ask what was to be *his* future lot; but Jesus, who in his answers had always regard to the moral condition of the questioner, answered evasively: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee. Follow *thou* me." This doubtless refers to the time of the destruction of the Hebrew polity and temple, which John survived; but some were led to conceive by this that the beloved disciple would never die, and the curious inquirer into ecclesiastical history meets with many traces of this opinion.

Forty days after the Passover came the feast of Pentecost; and some days before this the disciples returned to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast. There they were again met by Jesus, who gave them his last and most important charge, enjoining them to remain at Jerusalem till they were gifted with powers from on high, after which they were to go abroad among the nations, "preaching the Gospel to every creature."

He then led them forth to the Mount of Olives, as far as Bethany, where he lifted up his hands to bestow on them his last solemn blessing; and while his hands were still outspread as in the act of blessing, he arose gradually from among them, and disappeared in the heavens—"Where he sitteth on the right hand of God." The disciples then returned with joyful hearts to Jerusalem, where they were constantly in the temple praising and blessing God.



865.—Disciples at Emmaus. (Guercino.)
Y Disgyblion yn Emmaus.



66.—Incredulity of Thomas. (Vanderwerff.)
Anghredinizeth Thomas.



864.—Christ at Emmaus.
Crist yn Emmaus.



863.—Christ appearing to his Disciples.
Crist yn ymddangos i'w Ddisgyblion.



862.—Christ appearing to Mary Magdalen. (Poussin.)
Crist yn ymddangos i Mair Magdalen.



867.—"Whither shall I go then from thy spirit?—If I climb up into heaven, thou art there." (Guido.)—Psalm cxxxix. 7, 8.
"I ba le yr af oddi wrth dy yspryd?—Os dringaf i'r nefoedd, yno yr wyt ti."



868.—Theologia (Raffaelle.)
Duwinyddiaeth.



869.—Poesy. (Raffaelle.)
Barddoniaeth.

SUNDAY XXXV.—THE PSALMS.

HEBREW POETRY.

YET another species of the Antithetic Parallel requires a part of the first line to be supplied in the second to complete the sentence :—

"He who uttereth truth manifesteth righteousness;
But a false witness, deceit."
(Prov. xii. 17.)

"Only with pride cometh contention;
But with the well-advised, wisdom." (Prov. xiii. 10.)

There are instances of antithetic triplets, in which the second and third lines are gradational :—

"Behold, my servants shall sing aloud for gladness of heart;
But ye shall cry aloud for grief of heart;
And in the anguish of a broken spirit shall ye howl."
(Isa. lxv. 14.)

Here the two last lines are antithetical to the first, and while the antithesis to the first line is most literal in the second line, the third rises above it in intensity of signification.

There are also stanzas of four lines, in which the opposition lies between the parts, the latter distich being opposed to the former :—

"Yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more;
Thou shalt look for his place, and it shall not be found:
But the meek shall inherit the land,
And delight themselves in abundant prosperity." (Ps. xxxvii.)

"For the moth shall consume them like a garment,
And the worm shall eat them like wool;
But my righteousness shall be eternal,
And my salvation to all generations." (Isa. li. 8.)

This kind of antithetical stanza is in some instances extended even to five lines :—

"Verily the heavens shall vanish like smoke,
And the earth decay like a garment,
And its inhabitants in like manner shall die;
But my salvation shall endure for ever,
And my righteousness shall not decay." (Isa. li. 6.)

III. The SYNTHETIC PARALLELS are those in which the parallelism consists only in the similar form of construction. Word does not answer to word, and sentence to sentence, as equivalent or opposite: but there is a correspondence or equality between the several propositions, in respect of the shape or turn of the whole sentence and of the constructive parts, such as noun answering to noun, verb to verb, member to member, negative to negative, interrogative to interrogative. The nineteenth Psalm furnishes a beautiful example of this kind of parallelism ;—

"The law of Jehovah is perfect, restoring the soul;
The testimony of Jehovah is sure, making wise the simple;
The precepts of Jehovah are right, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of Jehovah is clear, enlightening the eyes;
The fear of Jehovah is pure, enduring for ever;
The judgments of Jehovah are truth, they are righteous altogether;
More desirable than gold or than much fine gold,
And sweeter than honey or the dropping of honey-combs."
(Ps. xix. 7—11.)

In Isaiah lviii. 4—9, each verse is a stanza of synthetic parallels, and the whole passage is marked by this character. It is too long to insert in this place; but the reader may refer to it with advantage.

The following short and very complete specimens may, however, be added :—

"He that putteth not out his money to usury,
And taketh not a bribe against the innocent,
He that doeth these things shall never be moved." (Ps. xv. 5)

"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil;
Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness;
Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter." (Isa. v. 20.)

This last is an instance of the bi-membral construction, the lines consisting of double members, or two distinct, but corresponding propositions.

IV. The only other kind of parallelism which we are required to notice is that to which the name of INTROVERTED PARALLELISM is usually applied. In this the stanzas are so constructed, that, whatever be the number of lines, the first line shall be parallel with the last, the second with the penultimate, or last but one, and so on throughout, in an order that looks inward, or, to borrow a military phrase, from flanks to centre:

"And it shall come to pass in that day,
Jehovah shall make a gathering of his fruit
From the flood of the river,
To the stream of Egypt;
And ye shall be gleaned up, one by one,
O ye sons of Israel.
And it shall come to pass in that day,
The great trumpet shall be sounded;
And those shall come who were perishing in the land of Assyria,
And who were dispersed in the land of Egypt;
And they shall bow themselves down before Jehovah
In the holy mountain in Jerusalem." (Isa. xxvii. 12, 13.)

On this Bishop Jebb, who first discriminated this kind of parallelism, remarks :—"In these two stanzas of Isaiah, figuratively in the first and literally in the second, is predicted the return of the Jews from their several dispersions. The first line of each stanza is parallel with the sixth, the second with the fifth, the third with the fourth: also on comparing the stanzas with each other, it is manifest that they are constructed with the utmost precision of mutual correspondence, clause harmonizing with clause, and line respectively with line; the first line of the first stanza with the first line of the second, and so throughout."

The following are shorter examples, which, after the explanations already given, will be easily understood and appreciated ;—

"Though he heap up silver as the dust,
And prepare raiment as the clay;
He may prepare it, but the just shall put it on,
And the innocent shall divide the silver." (Job xxvii. 16, 17.)

"I also will laugh at your destruction,
I will mock when your fear cometh;
When your fear cometh as a desolation,
And your destruction cometh as a whirlwind." (Prov. i. 26, 27.)

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
Neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord;
For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways,
And my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isa. lv. 8, 9.)

The Rev. Thomas Boys, in his 'Key to the Book of Psalms,' has shown that many simple couplets may be so divided in the reading as to admit of this introverted arrangement, and to receive much illustration from it. Thus in Psalm xviii. 20—

"The Lord hath rewarded me according to my righteousness;
According to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me"—

Will read thus :—

"The Lord hath rewarded me
According to my righteousness;
According to the cleanness of my hands
Hath he recompensed me."

And so in the following :—

"Have mercy upon me, O God,
According to thy loving kindness;
According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies,
Blot out my transgressions." (Ps. li. 1.)

"Because he hath set his love upon me,
Therefore will I deliver him;
I will set him on high,
Because he hath known my name." (Ps. xci. 14.)

The subject of Hebrew parallelism offers a wide field, which we have on the present occasion skimmed but lightly. The examples which have been offered will, however, enable the reader to trace many others in the books of Scripture; and the discovery of these latent qualities will not only furnish a high intellectual enjoyment, but will impart much spiritual instruction, through the clearer development of the sense in many parts of the Divine Word, which may under this mode of study be obtained.

SUNDAY XXXV.—BIBLE HISTORY.

ALL the works of the temple being finished (B.C. 1005), the dedication of it was reserved for the next year, which was a year of Jubilee—that great periodical holy year of rest and joy to the Israelites, which few could hope to witness more than once in their lives.

As the principal object to be served by the temple was to afford a resting-place to the ark, the dedication was no sooner resolved upon than preparations were made for introducing it with due pomp into the sanctuary. In the presence of nearly the whole nation, assembled at Jerusalem, including all the courses of priests and orders of Levites, the procession commenced from the city of David, where the ark lay, to the portals of the splendid edifice, accompanied with many instruments of music, and the cheerful sound of psalms chanted by the Levitical choirs. The psalms were selected or composed for this solemn service; and when the sons of Levi, bearing their precious burden, drew near the eastern porch, the singers broke forth in the triumphal strain—

> "Lift up your heads, O ye gates,
> And be ye lift, ye everlasting doors,
> That the King of Glory may come in."

At the moment when the ark of the covenant was deposited in the holy of the holies, between the cherubim, the innumerable Levitical choirs thundered forth their well known song—sent to the heavens by their united voices, and by the harmonious concord of a thousand instruments—

> "Praise ye Jehovah! for he is good;
> For his mercy endureth for ever!"

At that moment, suddenly, as at the consecration of the tabernacle, the holy building was covered with a thick cloud, which filled it wholly, and which enveloped the priests in such profound obscurity that they were unable to continue their ministrations. This was a manifest symbol that the Lord had accepted this building as his house, and that his presence had descended to dwell therein. The deep silence that ensued was broken by the voice of Solomon, who stood upon a brazen platform in front of the altar. He spread forth his hands towards heaven, and gave utterance to the noble and affecting prayer by which the house was set apart to the worship of the God of Israel, and in which the divine blessing was invoked upon all who should thereafter join in the venerable rites to which it was dedicated. It is observable how prominently and beautifully the idea is brought forward that the temple was to be regarded as *a house*, a palace, which the Divine King was to fill with his presence, and in which he was to reside among his people. This was the true idea of the establishment, under the peculiar circumstances of the Hebrew theocracy, and it is interesting to find that this view of the subject was so distinctly present to the mind of the young king. Yet the idea of any human structure, however magnificent, being the abode of the Lord of heaven and earth, struck him in the point of view which must be taken by any thoughtful mind. "But will God indeed dwell on the earth?" he cried: "Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee;—how much less this house which I have builded?"

This great festival was followed by an entertainment of a more ordinary nature, suitable to the joyful commemoration which usually marked the feast of tabernacles. On this great occasion Solomon is said to have offered a sacrifice of twenty-two thousand oxen and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep. In the first act of sacrifice the same mark of the divine acceptance and favour was given as at the original establishment of the ritual service in the wilderness; for the victims, when laid out upon the altar, were consumed by fire from heaven; and the fire thus kindled was sacredly preserved and kept up—was never lost or extinguished, till the destruction of the temple by the Chaldæans. On this great occasion, the festivities of the season were continued a week beyond the usual period; "and on the three-and-twentieth day of the seventh month, he sent the people away unto their tents, glad and merry in heart for the goodness that the Lord had showed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his people."

Having thus accomplished this great duty, the king turned his attention to the construction of various sumptuous buildings and great public works, suited to the honour of his crown and the dignity of his kingdom. In the book of Ecclesiastes, which is supposed to have been written by him, there appears a distinct and interesting allusion to these undertakings: "I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards; I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kinds of fruit; I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees. I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle, above all that were in Jerusalem before me. I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces; I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts. So I was great, and possessed more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem; *also my wisdom remained with me.*" Connected with what precedes, there seems a very significant emphasis in this last clause, which it is not our present duty to develop.

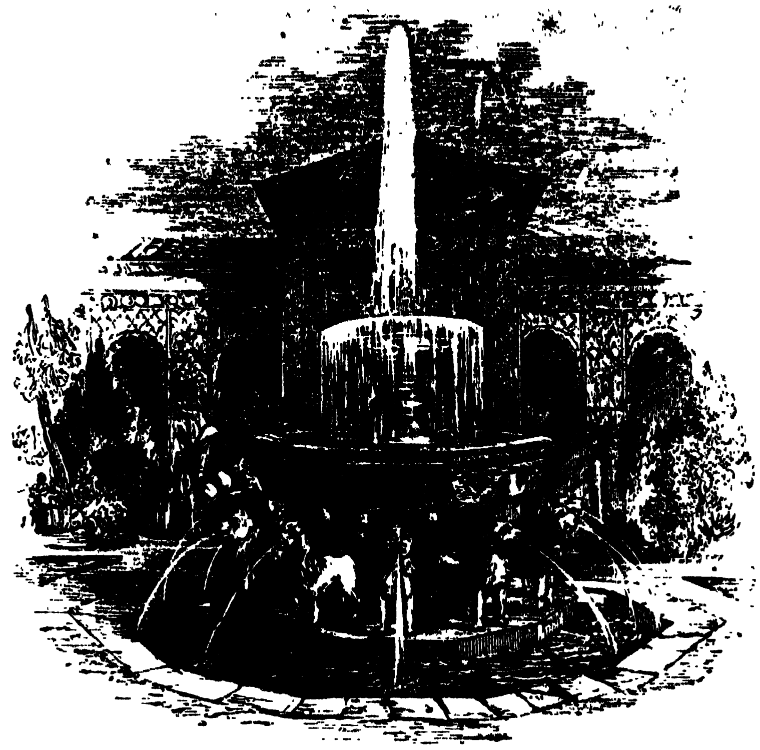
This passage is finely paraphrased, and the glories of Solomon's reign beautifully embodied, in the following extract from Heber's 'Palestine:'—

> "Triumphant race! and did your power decay?
> Fail'd the bright promise of your earlier day?
> No:—by that sword, which, red with heathen gore,
> A giant spoil, the stripling champion bore;
> By him, the chief to farthest India known,
> The mighty master of the ivory throne;
> In heaven's own strength, victorious o'er her foes,
> Victorious Salem's lion banner rose:
> Before her footstool prostrate nations lay,
> And vassal tyrants crouch'd beneath her sway;
> And he, the kingly sage, whose restless mind,
> Through nature's mazes wander'd unconfined,
> Who every bird, and beast, and insect knew,
> And spoke of every plant that quaffs the dew,
> To him were known—so Hagar's offspring tell—
> The powerful vigil and the starry spell,
> The midnight call, hell's shadowy legions dread,
> And sounds that burst the slumbers of the dead.
> Hence all his might; for who could these oppose?
> And Tadmor thus, and Syrian Balbec rose.
>
> "Such, the faint echo of departed days,
> Still sound Arabia's legendary lays;
> And thus their fabling bards delight to tell
> How lovely were thy tents, O Israel!
>
> "For thee his ivory load Behemoth bore,
> And far Sofala teemed with golden ore;
> Thine all the arts that wait on wealth's increase,
> Or bask and wanton in the beam of peace.
> When Tyber slept beneath the cypress gloom,
> And silence held the lonely woods of Rome;
> Or ere to Greece the builder's skill was known,
> Or the light chisel brush'd the Parian stone;
> Yet here fair Science nurs'd her infant fire,
> Fann'd by the artist aid of friendly Tyre:
> Then tower'd the palace, then in awful state
> The Temple rear'd its everlasting Gate."

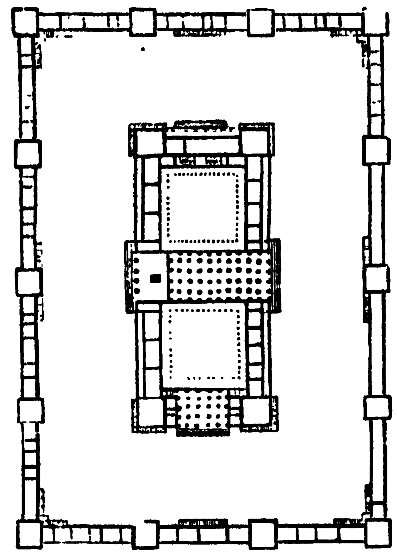
Of the royal buildings erected by Solomon, particular notice is taken in Scripture of the palace which he built for himself, which the Jewish writers describe in very glowing language; another palace which he built for the residence of Pharaoh's daughter; and "the house of the forest of Lebanon." Most writers take these to have been distinct and separate fabrics, but to those acquainted with the Eastern style of building and the arrangements of palaces, it will appear very clear that the king's own palace and that of his queen were no other than different quadrangles of the same great pile of buildings—separate in their economical arrangements, but communicating with each other. The description given by Josephus confirms this impression, or at least shows that he took the same view of the subject. The quadrangle into which the great gate of general entrance opens, usually contains the state apartments and offices, particularly the hall in which the sovereign gives audience, sits in judgment, and transacts all public business. Hence the royal court is very often called "the Gate," of which a familiar example is offered in the Ottoman *Porte*, and of which instances occur in Scripture with regard to the courts of the Hebrew, Babylonian, and Persian kings. The account of Josephus suggests that the palace, as a whole, consisted of *three* distinct courts, and communicating with their appropriate buildings and offices; of which the one in the centre contained the state apartments, while that on the right hand formed the private residence of the king, and that on the left the harem or palace of the Egyptian princess: and this arrangement is so conformable to the usages which have always been maintained in the East, that we are disposed to take it as an ascer-



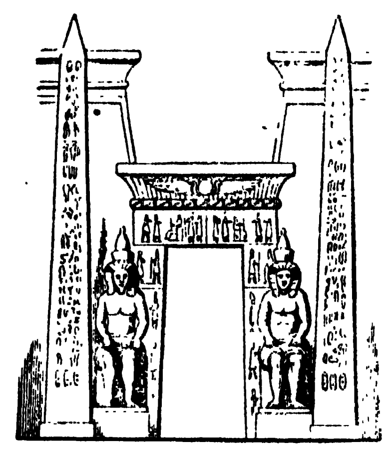
872.—Egyptian Temple.
Teml Aiphtaidd.



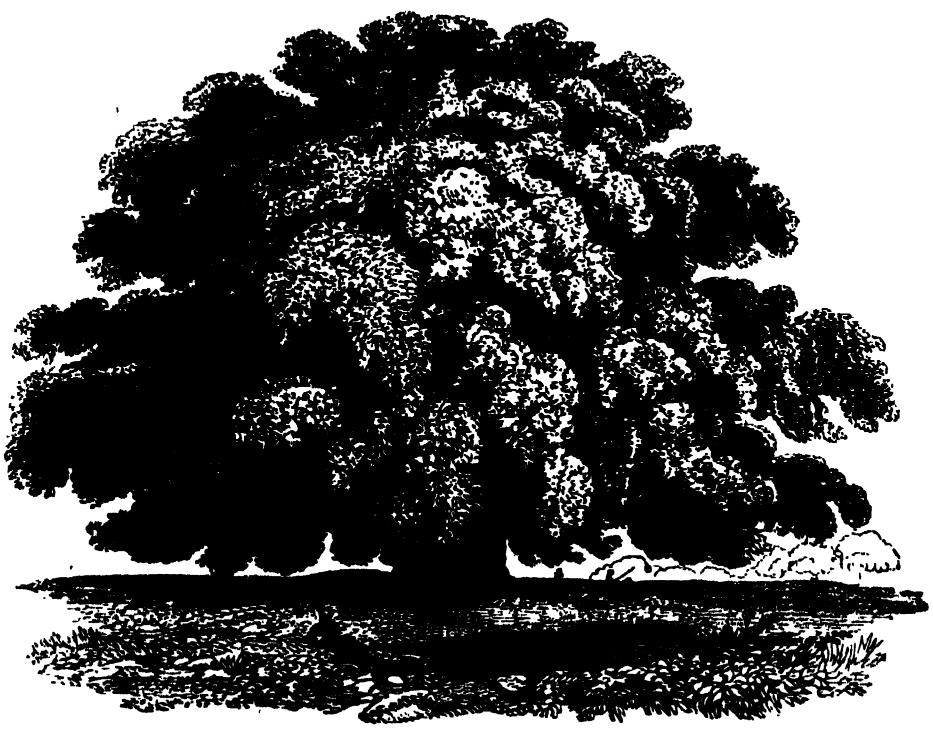
870.—Fountain of the Lions.
Ffynnon y Llewod.



871.—Ground-plan of King's House.
Llawr-lun Ty y Brenin.



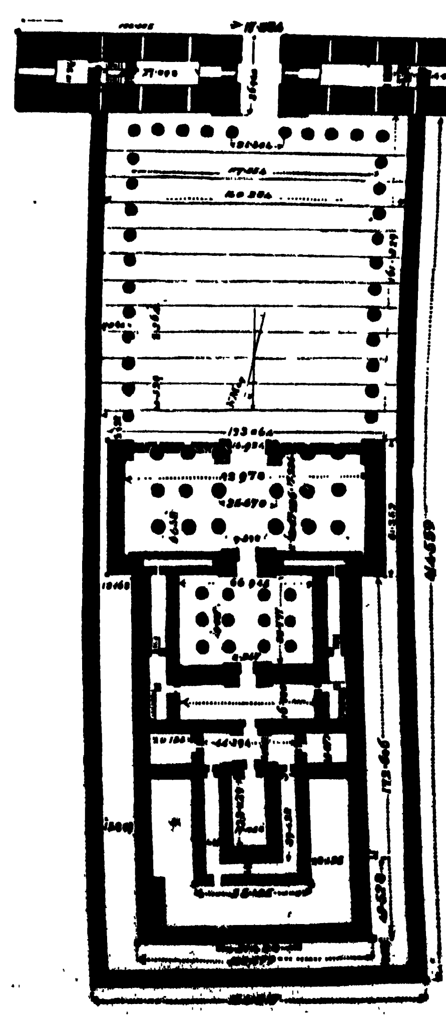
873.—Obelisks in front of a Temple.
Cerf-adail o flaen y Deml.



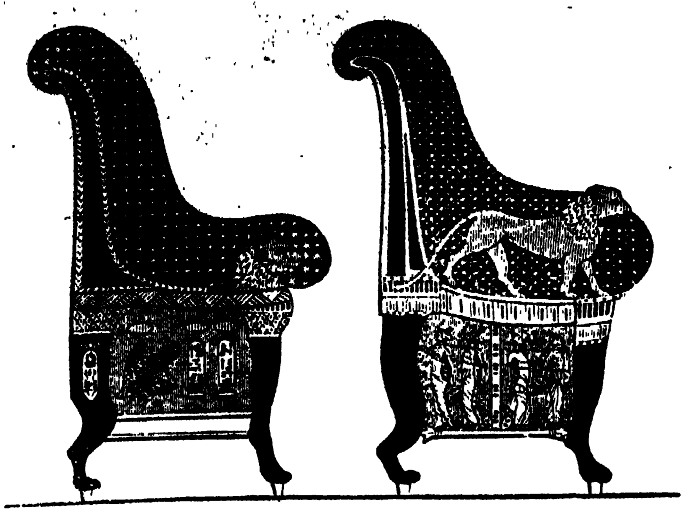
875.—Sycamore Tree.
Sycamorwydden.



874.—General View of the Great Temple at Edfou.
Golygfa gyffredinol o'r Deml Fawr yn Edfou.



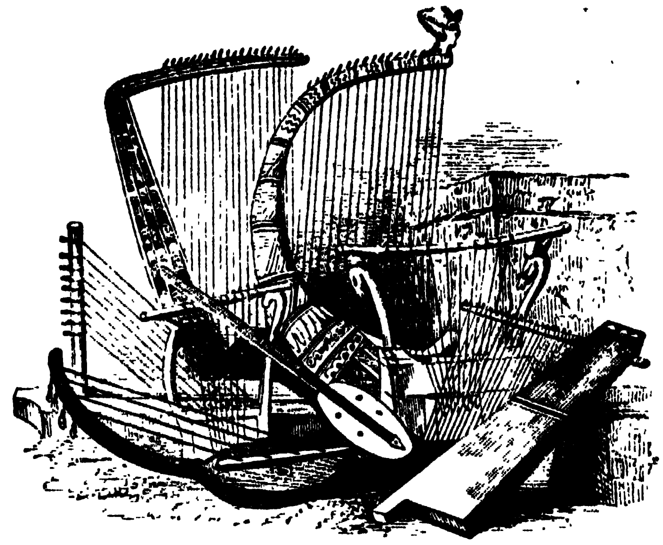
876.—Ground-plan of the Temple at Edfou.
(The dimensions are in feet, and tenths of a foot.)
Llawr-lun y Deml yn Edfou.
(Y mae'r mantioli yn droedfeddi, a degfed ran troedfedd)



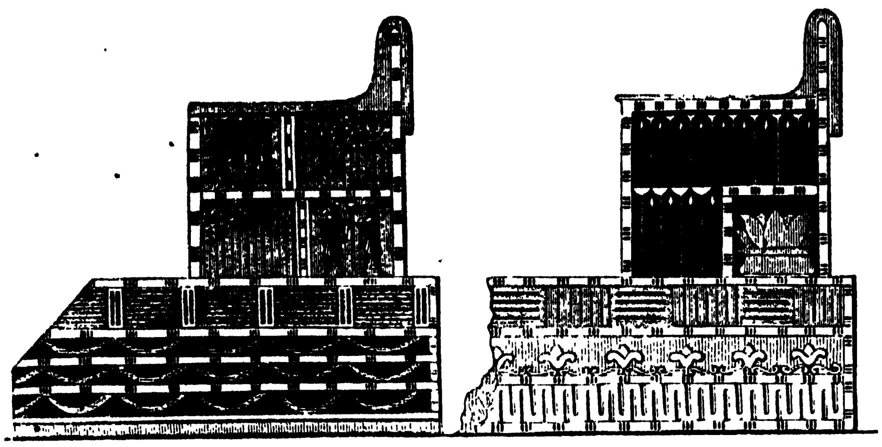
877.—Egyptian Fauteuils.
Ffawteuliaid Aiphtaidd.



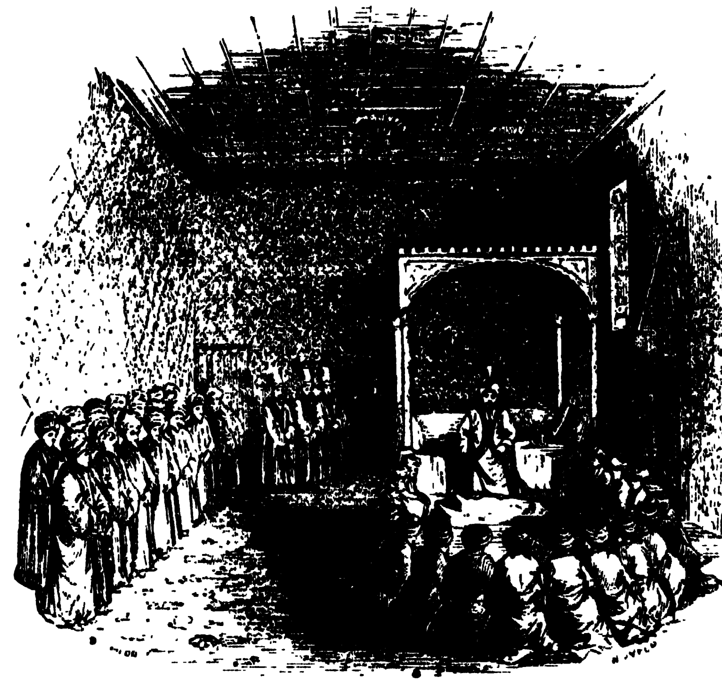
878.—Umbrella. (From Persepolis.)
Gwlawlen. (O Persepolis.)



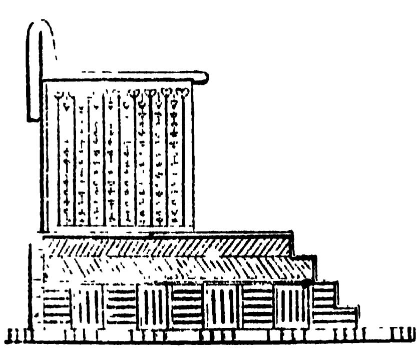
879.—Egyptian Stringed Instruments.
Offer Cerdd tannau Aiphtaidd.



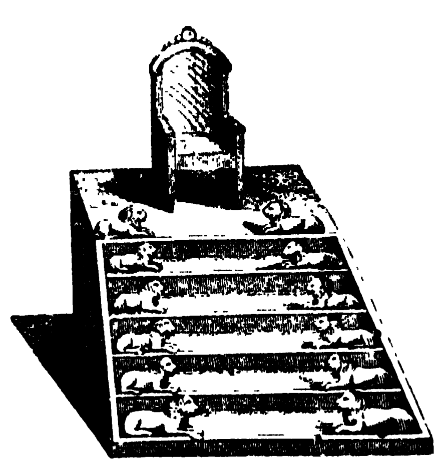
880.—Egyptian Thrones.
Gorseddfeingciau Aiphtaidd.



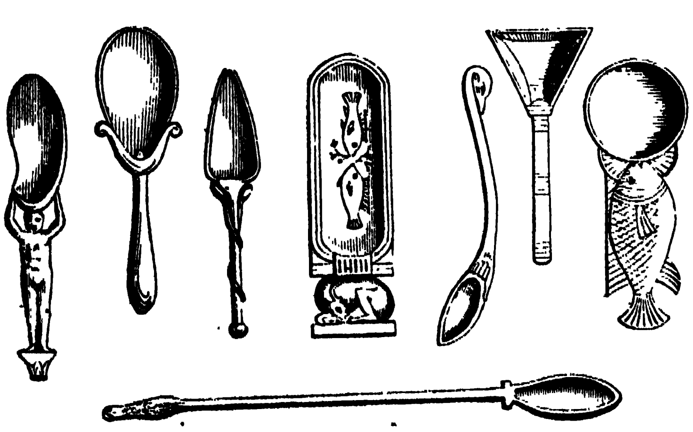
883.—King (the Sultan) on Throne.
Brenin (y Sultan) ar Orsedd.



881.—Throne with Steps.
Gorseddfainge â Grisiau iddi.



882.—Solomon's Throne. (After Villalpandus.)
Gorseddfainge Solomon.



884.—Spoons.
Llwyau.



885.—Eunuch of the Turkish Seraglio.
Eunuch Brenhinllys Tyrcaidd.



886.—Gate of Justice. (From Murphy's 'Arabian Antiquities of Spain.')
Porth Cyfiawnder.

tained fact. In this case "the house of the forest of Lebanon" (supposed to be so called from the number of its cedar columns) was probably formed by the buildings of the central quadrangle, containing the hall of state.

"It would be an endless task," says the Jewish historian, "to give a particular survey of this mighty mass of buildings; so many courts and other contrivances; such a variety of chambers and offices, great and small; long and large galleries; vast rooms of state and others for feasting and entertainment, set out as richly as could be with costly furniture and gilding; besides that all the service for the king's table was of pure gold. In a word, the whole palace was in a manner made up, from the base to the coping, of white marble, cedar, gold, and silver; with precious stones here and there intermingled upon the walls and ceilings."

It is and always has been the etiquette of Eastern courts, that the king, as supreme magistrate, should to a certain extent administer justice in person, and be accessible to the complaints of all his subjects. In conformity with this usage, Solomon was wont to sit in the open porch of his palace, which was therefore called "the porch of judgment;" and this was an obvious application of the very ancient and still subsisting practice of making the gate the seat of justice. Solomon's porch of judgment seems to have been a large covered apartment, supported by pillars and entirely open in front. Here, upon a raised platform to which there was an ascent by steps, was placed the throne of Solomon, which is mentioned with such marked admiration in the Scriptural accounts, and with still stronger praise by Josephus. This we collect to have consisted of a magnificent seat, placed upon a daïs or platform, to which there was an ascent of six steps, on each of which were fixed the figures of two lions in gold, forming a sort of fence or balustrade to the ascent. The ascent between the twelve lions of gold, with the splendid seat at the top, must have formed a very magnificent throne, probably not unlike those which, in the mural paintings of Egypt, are appropriated to the gods and kings. The throne itself was of ivory, studded and enriched with gold, and over it a semispherical canopy appears to have been suspended. Although there was no throne equal to this in any kingdom for costliness and splendour, a comparison of the description with the engravings which we are enabled to offer, will show that in its general plan and character it corresponded with the thrones of the ancient and modern East.

It is admitted by all who have carefully considered the design and spirit of the Hebrew institutions, that it was never intended that the Israelites should become a commercial people, so long as those institutions remained in practical operation. Traffic tends to promote union among nations, binding them together by the strong ties of a common interest and common benefits: but it was, contrariwise, the special and peculiar object of the Mosaical polity to separate the Hebrews from other nations, and to create between them, for that end, interests diverse, distinctive, and segregative. We can see this essential policy of the theocracy followed out in their exclusion from most if not all parts of the western coast, although their territory reached in most points within a few miles of it. Neither does it appear that the inspired lawgiver ever had it in view that the Israelites should establish any permanent settlements on the Arabian Gulf. It is true, indeed, that he, in God's name, promised that their border should reach from the Red Sea to the Sea of the Philistines. But this prediction was connected with another, implying the temporary ascendancy of Jacob over his elder brother, and can scarcely be construed to authorize, or even to indicate, the actual or abiding appropriation of the lands belonging to the Edomites. On the contrary, when the Hebrews, in their march to Canaan, seemed likely to come in contact with that people, the word of the Lord came to Moses, saying, "Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau, who dwell in Seir, and they shall be afraid of you: take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore, meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as a foot breadth; because I gave Mount Seir unto Esau for a possession." (Deut. ii. 4, 5.)

In connection with this subject, and as a further illustration of it, we may also observe that the trading people of Canaan, and particularly the Sidonians, for Tyre did not then exist, are not among those with whom the Israelites were commanded to wage a war of extermination. Their peculiar pursuits, while they might be profitable to an agricultural state, such as Israel was then destined to become, wanting a market for its redundant produce, could by no means interfere with the cultivation of land or the pasturage of herds; and hence, as there has been already occasion to remark, no attempt was ever made to disturb the Phœnicians in their possessions; and whatever relations did exist between them and the Hebrews were of a friendly character. In the time of David and Solomon, especially, the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon, though they ceased not to be idolaters, lived on terms of intimate intercourse with the Israelites: and this intercourse after their time became even more close and amicable, and was the source of some serious evils, which there will soon be occasion to notice.

The peculiar amity and confidence between Hiram, king of Tyre, and the Hebrew kings David and Solomon, has lately been noticed in this work. The conquests of the former, and the great power of the latter, could not have been displeasing to commercial Tyre, seeing that a yoke not easy to be broken was thus laid upon the necks of various small nations who were able and willing to annoy the Phœnicians, and to imitate, if not rival, the commerce by which they were enriched; and seeing that it placed power in the hands of a people not by policy or habit inclined to commercial pursuits.

Solomon, however, was not slow to perceive the prosperity which the Phœnicians derived from this foreign trade; and, notwithstanding the considerations which have been stated, he had a strong desire to share in these advantages. The part he had taken in the land traffic has already been seen, and its profits, probably, gave strength to his desire to obtain a share in the maritime trade, which was then almost entirely engrossed by the Phœnicians. We are unacquainted with the nature of the inducements which Solomon was able to offer a people, so jealous in all matters concerning their trade, to prevail upon them to afford him the benefit of their experience in this enterprise. It is, however, certain that they furnished the king with ships, such as they employed in their distant voyages westward, and which were called ships of Tarshish. They obtained this name from being such as were employed in their then most distant navigation, to Tarshish or Tartessus in Spain, just as we call certain ships "Indiamen" from their being built for and adapted to the voyage and trade to India. Such ships, manned by Phœnician mariners, King Hiram furnished to Solomon; and they sailed on their distant voyage in company with a fleet of Tyrian ships. That the Phœnicians must have had very cogent reasons for allowing themselves to be made instrumental in enriching the Hebrew king by trade with foreign parts, no one acquainted with the historical character of that people will in the least degree doubt. In seeking the motive by which their proceedings were determined, it would be important to examine the direction of the voyage. In the 'Pictorial Bible' strong reasons are given for the conclusion that the regions visited in this navigation to Ophir embraced the southern coasts of Arabia, the eastern shores of Africa, and possibly the island of Ceylon, if not some points of the Indian peninsula. Assuming this to be the case, we shall perceive that although the Phœnicians had the entire command of the western traffic on the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts, they could have no part in this important eastern traffic, but on such terms as Solomon thought proper to impose. He was in possession of the ports of the Elanitic Gulf and of the intervening country, whereby he held the key of the Red Sea, and could at his pleasure exclude them from that important, and to them only available, door of access to the Indian Ocean, the other arm of the Red Sea being in the possession of Egypt. The more difficult access to the same regions by the Euphrates and the Persian Gulf was equally in the power of the Hebrew king, by means of his military stations on the Euphrates, and of his possession of the country west of that river, which must be traversed by caravans. These considerations may help to explain the relative position of the parties in this great transaction. Nor, perhaps, was King Solomon so entirely dependent upon the assistance of the Phœnicians as might seem at the first glance; for although the Israelites knew little of maritime affairs, this was by no means the case with the Edomites, who were at this time the subjects of Solomon, and from whom he could doubtless have obtained all the assistance he required; and this furnishes another reason why the Tyrians may not have found it expedient to baulk the inclinations of the Jewish king. The lively interest which Solomon took in the matter, transpires incidentally, in the fact that he went in person to Ezion-Geber, to superintend the preparations and to witness the departure of the fleet.

No doubt the heart of the king beat high as his noble fleet left the port. It was such a sight as no Hebrew prince or chief had ever before witnessed, and such as few afterwards were permitted to behold.

Three years he had to await its return; and then it came back safe to port, laden with the riches and the curious products of Africa and the East. The ship-masters and supercargoes knew well that they could not better gratify their employer than by collecting and bringing to him the rarities of foreign parts. Among these were various animals and birds previously unknown to the Hebrews, and apes and peacocks are particularly mentioned.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

THE Apostles had been instructed by their Lord to remain together at Jerusalem till they should be endued with power and enlightenment from on high, in preparation for the great work to which they were appointed.

After having witnessed the ascension of their Lord into the heaven of heavens, they therefore returned into the city and hastened to the privacy of the upper chamber in some private house (perhaps that which John occupied), where they might pray together and discourse with one another without restraint. In the houses both of the Greeks and Orientals there were certain upper apartments, usually so constructed as to serve for the purpose of dining-rooms, parlours, apartments for taking exercise, &c.; and from their stillness and privacy were often appropriated as oratories for the purposes of united and family worship, or religious retirement and prayer. In such a chamber the apostles, and those of the immediate disciples of Christ who had witnessed the ascension, to the number of one hundred and twenty, appear to have spent most of their time together in this place during the few days which were still to elapse before the feast of Pentecost.

On one of these intervening days Peter stood up and urged upon the brethren then present the expediency of appointing some one to fill up the place among the twelve apostles which had been left vacant by the treason and death of Judas. It was judged important that the person who might succeed to this office should be one who had from the first been a witness of the life and works of Jesus: and among those then present there were two who seemed so equal in claims and qualifications, that it was found difficult to determine which of them was the best fitted for the office. One of these was Joseph, surnamed Barsabas; and the other was called Matthias, both of whom are, with good reasons, supposed to have been among the number of the seventy disciples. As there was some doubt in the choice between persons whose claims were so nearly balanced, the apostles invoked in solemn prayer the direction of God upon their choice, and then cast lots between them. The lot fell upon Matthias, and he was thenceforth numbered with the eleven apostles. The mode in which the lot was in this instance cast cannot be determined, the ancient methods of doing this being various. The most usual mode, however, was to cast the names written on equal substances, into an urn, and decide the question by the act of drawing them forth; and this is generally supposed to have been the plan adopted in this choice of an apostle.

Forty-nine days since the Passover had at length elapsed, and the fiftieth day, being the Feast of Pentecost, had fully come, when the one hundred and twenty disciples (or, as some suppose, the apostles only) were assembled "in one place," which we may conceive to have been the same place which has already been mentioned. They are supposed by some to have assembled on this occasion with some expectation that on the very day on which the memory of the promulgation of the law on Mount Sinai was celebrated, the promise of Christ respecting the Holy Spirit to be sent from heaven would have its completion; and that God would, by some sign striking to the senses, declare that the religion of Christ was now to be more widely promulgated through them.

But although they were thus waiting apparently for the manifestation of the Spirit, they were wholly unprepared for the sudden and very remarkable manner in which it came upon them. At once the house was filled with the sound as of a mighty wind sweeping along like a tempest, and at the same instant there appeared upon the head of every one of them a lambent flame, described as "cloven tongues of fire," from the resemblance of a pointed flame to a tongue; and this was an external sign or symbol of the mighty change which at the same instant took place within them, for "they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." From that time they became as new men. All their previous misconceptions concerning the nature of Christ's kingdom passed away, and the whole plan of the divine economy of man's redemption was open to them. They were thus qualified to declare to others those great mysteries of God; and seeing that they would have to declare them to many nations whose languages they understood not, they were enabled to speak at once in any human tongue the great message intrusted to them.

There were at this time in Jerusalem Jews from almost all the known countries of the world—countries in which they were born, and whose languages were their mother-tongues. When the news of this strange event was noised abroad, many of them, with others, hurried to the spot; and great was their amazement when they heard the uninstructed disciples of Christ, most of them natives of Galilee, speak to them in all their different languages. Some of those who were thus drawn together hesitated what judgment to form, but others hastily concluded that they were under the influence of wine. This dishonour to the great gift of God roused Peter, who, courageously standing up with the eleven, that the multitude might behold in them the chief of Christ's followers, refuted the calumny by calling attention to the early time of the morning, the third hour, or nine o'clock, being the time of morning prayer, before which those who had any regard for religion among the Hebrews never took food or drink. Not content with this, the earnest apostle proceeded to show how the ancient prophecies were accomplished by this event, as well as in the death and resurrection of Christ, whom he proved to be the Messiah promised to the fathers. Under the Divine blessing, the effect of this calm, resolute, and well-reasoned discourse—this first Christian sermon—was most wonderful. A great part of the audience were smitten to the heart, and three thousand of their number were that very day received by baptism into the infant church. These, from that hour, frequented the society of the apostles, and joined in their holy feasts and devotions. Most of them were strangers in Jerusalem, and, probably, on publicly professing themselves as the disciples of Jesus, and remaining in the city longer than they had at first intended, had become excluded from the hospitality and kindness which the Jews commonly exercised. This would all the more unite them to the other disciples; and now regarding themselves as one family, having common wants and interests, without any separate objects in life, they threw their possessions into a common stock, "and parted them to all men, as every man had need." This was not compulsory upon them,—it was the spontaneous act of their own minds, suited to the circumstances of these first converts and to the peculiar necessities of the infant church.

Being thus disencumbered of the cares of life, "they continued daily with one accord in the temple (at the stated hours of prayer), and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people." Had then the mass of the people become favourable to the doctrines of the cross? This is not implied; but it is understood that the humble, serious, and devoted lives of the converts, disarmed for a time the enemies of Christ, and won for them a degree of tolerance and favour which secured for the infant days of the church a brief interval of repose, needful to strengthen the arms which were destined to overturn the rank idolatries and dark systems of the world.

It is clear that the disciples continued to resort to the temple for devotion, at the customary hours of prayer. Whether they joined in the sacrifices of the temple is not said, but it is by no means improbable that they did; as they did not yet clearly understand the great truth that the whole system of sacrificial worship was, in fact, abolished by the death of Christ, seeing that there remained "no more sacrifice for sin" when He, in whom all the sacrificial types were accomplished, was offered up, "once for all," for the sins of the world. The temple was the place, and its ritual service the manner, in which they and their fathers had worshipped, and they came very slowly to the conclusion that they were to abandon this sacred place and its services, as things which had become old and had passed away.

We are told in general terms, that after the outpouring of the divine spirit, many signs and wonders were wrought by the apostles. Of these wonders one is selected by the sacred historian as an example of the others; and it is well suited to convey a distinct impression of the great powers with which the apostles were now vested; and to convince us that they were adequate to the great services for the glory of God and the benefit of mankind which they were called to perform. It is of much importance for the confirmation of the truth that this narrative has been given to us; and the Evangelist, instead of contenting himself with the general statement that *much* was done, proceeds to say in one marked instance *what* was done, and in relation to whom and under what circumstances a great miracle was performed.



887.—The Ascension. (Rubens.)
Yr Esgyniad.



888.—Descent of the Holy Ghost.
Disgyniad yr Ysbryd Glân.



889.—Admission of St. Matthias.
Etholiad St. Matthias.



890.—St. Peter curing the Cripple.
St. Petr yn iachâu'r Cloff.



891.—Worship of Isis.
Addoliad Isis.



892.—Egyptian Priests.
Offeiriaid Aiphtaidd.



893.—Breastplate.
Dwyfroneg.



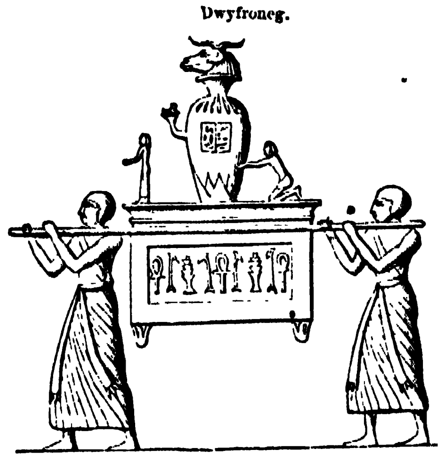
894.—Ephod and Girdle.
Ephod a Gwregys.



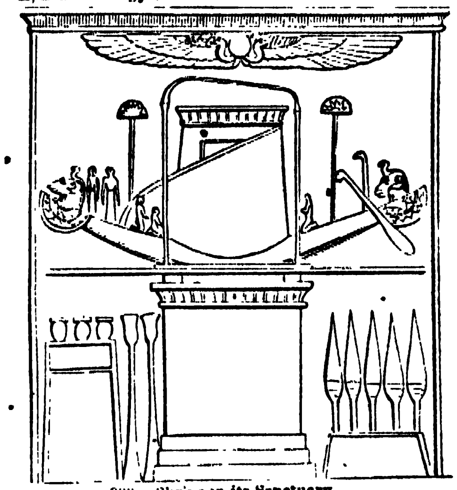
899.—Drawers and Girdle.
Llodrau a Gwregys.



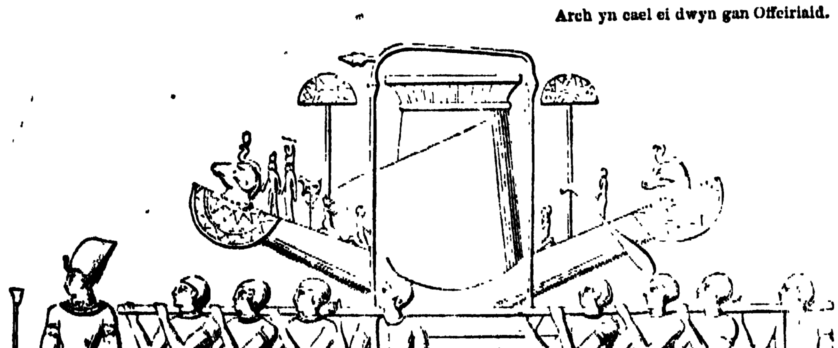
895.—Ephod and Censer.
Ephod a Thuser.



896.—Ark borne by Priests.
Arch yn cael ei dwyn gan Offeiriaid.



898.—Shrine in its Sanctuary.
Creirfa yn ei Chysegr.



897.—Shrine and Ark borne by Priests.
Creirfa ac Arch yn cael ei dwyn gan Offeiriaid.



900.—Shrine carried in Procession.
Creirfa yn cael ei chludo mewn Gorymdaith.

SUNDAY XXXVI.—THE PROPHET EZEKIEL.

IN the concluding chapters of Ezekiel there is a very minute account of the ceremonies of worship which should be established under the restored temple and theocracy. Ezekiel was then a captive by the river Chebar, and as the institutions described are evidently Mosaical, it is usually supposed that this description was designed for the use of the Israelites when, after their return from bondage, they would have to rebuild the temple and restore the ritual service. Under this view it is conceived that Ezekiel describes for the most part what actually existed before the destruction of the temple; and the differences observed in some of the details from those described in the books of Moses, are supposed to arise from the alterations of practice which had arisen in the long interval between the times in which Moses and Ezekiel wrote. This is the view we are ourselves inclined to adopt; and it renders these chapters of the prophet an interesting commentary upon the corresponding portions of the Pentateuch. Another view of these chapters makes them a description of the services and arrangements which are to be established among the descendants of Abraham, when, at some future day, they are restored to the land of their fathers; and we shall not undertake to decide that this view is wrong, although the former appears to us the more reasonable.

Some of the details contained in this remarkable portion of sacred writ may receive some striking and valuable illustration from antiquarian research into the practices of other nations; and with this we shall occupy the present page.

In xlvi. 3, the people are represented as worshipping "at the door of the gate before the Lord." We know that this was the mode of worship under the law of Moses, and we are also aware that the same practice existed among other ancient nations; the building itself being merely, as we have repeatedly intimated, the residence of the deity, while the area in front was the place of sacrifice and worship. A pictorial representation of this mode of worship might suggest instructive information: it would afford materials for comparing the resemblances and differences between the practices of the heathen and those of the Israelites. Such a representation happily exists in a painting found at Portici, representing the worship of Isis as celebrated by the Egyptians, and that the scene itself is laid in Egypt appears from the palm-trees on each side the temple. This affords unexceptionable evidence to assist in determining the formerly much disputed question, whether the ceremonial worship of the Israelites resembled to a certain extent that of the Egyptians, or was altogether and designedly different from them. On this point it is remarked in the note upon this text, in the 'Pictorial Bible'—"That there are some resemblances is certain; and most of these applied, not only to the worship of the Egyptians, but to those of other nations also. And when we quietly consider the subject, while we see very clearly why ceremonies liable to misconception or abuse should be altered or omitted, there does not appear any reason why the forms which the general consent of man nd had considered suitable to mark their reverence or adoration, should be changed to something else which had not previously been known. Bowing the knee was a ceremony; but the Israelites were not forbidden to bow the knee, so long as they did not bow it to Baal. The *resemblances* which we see in the present instance are:—That sacrifice and worship are not performed in the sanctuary, but in the court before it, where also the altar appears to occupy nearly the same position as in the court before the Hebrew temple. The altar moreover is provided with "horns" or raised points at the angles, so often mentioned in the accounts of the Hebrew altars. Other analogies are, that the worshippers are in a standing posture, with one exception; that they are all barefooted, and that one man is blowing with a trumpet precisely similar in form to that which the Levites blew at the Hebrew sacrifices.

The differences are more considerable than the analogies. The temple is in a grove—a thing forbidden in Scripture: every individual is bareheaded, whereas the Hebrews never worshipped but with covered heads: the man who blows the trumpet is sitting, whereas it is a received maxim of the Jewish doctors, that no one could sit in the temple courts, except only the king for the time being of the house of David. The most important difference, however, is in the presence of the congregation on each side of the altar, ranged in lines between it and the sanctuary. This is evidently a mixed congregation, including even women; but among the Hebrews the congregation was not at all admitted into the court immediately before the sanctuary, which was appointed solely to the priests and Levites; and moreover the women did not assemble in the same outer court as the men, but had a separate one of their own. So different indeed was the practice in this matter, in the present example one of the three most conspicuous of the officiating personages (those at the top of the steps) is a female—a priestess of Isis. Among the Hebrews, moreover, the space between the porch and the altar was accounted, after the sanctuary itself, the most holy part of "the mountain of the Lord's house;" and hence, when an act of worship commenced, all persons entitled to be in this court withdrew from that part and arranged themselves below the *altar*. The present cut exhibits exactly the opposite custom.

These observations, suggested by this engraving, will serve to point out some of the more remarkable of the agreements and differences found in the forms of external worship among the Hebrews, as compared with those of their heathen neighbours. It is more than probable that when the Jews fell into idolatry, they worshipped some of their idols after the fashion shown in the engraving, and particularly "the queen of heaven," and the idols borrowed from Egypt.

The view thus taken respecting the analogies between certain parts of the Hebrew ceremonial and corresponding practices in Egypt, is now too well established, through the clear evidence of ancient paintings and sculptures, to be any longer open to question. In these we see a sacred ark, like those of the Hebrews, borne from one place to another on the shoulders of the priests, and when at rest deposited in the most holy place of the sanctuaries beneath overshadowing wings. In the Egyptian examples, however, the ark was a stand for the shrine or image of the god: but in the Jewish ark this was absent, and its place supplied by the cherubims and by the mysterious resplendence which betokened the divine presence. Another difference is in the boat, in which the shrine in most of the Egyptian examples is placed; a distinctive peculiarity which arises from the fact that the religious progresses of the Egyptians mostly took place in boats upon the bosom of the Nile.

In the dress of the priests similar correspondences may be traced. The material, linen, and the colour, white, alone offer most curious resemblances. It is clear from many passages that the Israelitish priests were clothed in white linen; and that the Egyptian priests were also thus clothed is manifest from Herodotus, who says, "But the priests alone wear linen clothing, and are not allowed to put on any other." It has indeed been urged that such garments did not belong to the Egyptian and Israelite priests alone, but were diffused throughout the ancient world. But it can be shown on the best authorities, that the linen vesture of the priests was regarded by the ancients as a remarkable and exclusive peculiarity of the Egyptians; and although the white colour was common enough among the priests of other nations, the combination of the white colour and linen material was so rare and peculiar, as to preclude the notion of an accidental agreement between Jewish and Egyptian antiquity. This is still clearer when analogies in the parts of the priestly costume become equally apparent. In the figures of Egyptian priests, as represented in the monuments, we may recognise the mitre of the Jewish high-priest, the linen drawers, the ephod or tunic, the robe of the ephod, the girdle, the breastplate, and even the Urim and Thummim, if this be, as usually understood, an appendage to, or a component part of, the magnificent breastplate.

Our space does not allow us to enter into the minute comparisons and details by which the opinion that certain assimilations to the Egyptian forms of religious service and the attire of the priests might be established and verified. Those who are curious in the matter may find ample materials for the investigation in the 'Pictorial History of Palestine;' and the cuts which we offer to the reader's consideration will alone go far to assist his conclusions. They will enable him to discover not only resemblances, but differences; and in inquiring the reason for such differences, he may be led to appreciate and understand many of the minute directions and exceptions in the ceremonial law, which have hitherto appeared to many as trivial or obscure. Much of the minute directions about dresses may, for instance, have been designed to exclude matters more or less objectionable, as being idolatrously symbolical, or as tending to idolatry or superstition, by describing with exactness what was to be worn, and by prohibiting the use of all which was not so described.

SUNDAY XXXVI.—BIBLE HISTORY.

PLANTS are not named, but we know that the king "spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall;" and from the interest which he was known to take in plants, it is more than probable that specimens and seeds of remarkable foreign plants were also brought to him; and we are inclined to refer to this period the introduction into Palestine of many plants of more eastern and southern countries. The mercantile lading of the returned fleet was found to consist of large quantities of gold and silver, elephants' teeth, and various kinds of valuable woods, and of precious stones. A large portion of these commodities were, doubtless, sold at a great profit; and this fact explains that while in one place the yearly weight of gold brought to the king by his ships is said to have been 480 talents (1 Kings ix. 28); in another (x. 14) the yearly weight of gold derived directly and indirectly from these voyages is stated at 666 talents, which, at the lowest computation, would be equal to 3,646,350*l.* sterling, while a higher scale would make the amount very little short of 4,000,000*l.*

It has already been hinted that the interest of Solomon in commercial undertakings extended to the great caravan trade, which, from very remote ages, coming from the far East and the Persian Gulf, proceeded to Egypt, Tyre, and other points on the Mediterranean, by the Euphrates and the great Syrian Desert. The possession of the intervening districts enabled the king to derive much emolument and benefit from this trade. The particulars are not well known to us; but from comparison of circumstances we may collect, that by his perfect command of the desert he was enabled to afford protection to the caravans from those predatory attacks of the Bedouin tribes, as have from the earliest times been a great dread and loss in this line of traffic. For this protection a tax or custom was probably levied upon the merchandise, and this must have been productive from the encouragement which, under this new order of circumstances, the trade would receive. But his great measure was to establish at one of the watering-places in the very heart of the desert, an emporium for this important trade. At such watering-places palm-trees are always found, and the distant appearance of these trees gladdens the heart of the traveller by the promise of water. Hence Solomon gave to his new city the name of Tadmor (palm-tree), and this is the same city which afterwards became historically, as well as commercially, illustrious under the Greek name of Palmyra. The importance to which this city rose, and the prosperity which it long maintained, afford the best possible evidence of the wisdom of the great king by whom it was founded. Here the caravans not only found water as before, but every advantage of shelter and rest; and here also the merchants, finding persons ready to take their commodities, and to furnish whatever they required in exchange, would be inclined to end their journey, leaving the distribution of their goods to the nations farther west, either to the factors of Solomon or to private merchants; for we know not to what degree the king found it advisable to leave this trade free to his own subjects. That he took some mercantile part in it, is probable from his course of proceeding with respect to the land trade with Egypt and the maritime commerce: but there were circumstances in this branch of trade which required more delicate management, and which might have occasioned any stringent attempt to monopolize the trade to have been fatal to the objects which he contemplated. Indeed, we see that the great fault of Solomon's commercial policy, apart from its unsuitableness to the Hebrew institutions, lay in the attempt of the government to engross its benefits as a source of royal revenue. No traffic can have healthy growth under such a system; and hence, probably, more than from any other single cause, the measures of Solomon had no permanent effect upon the pursuits or character of the nation, which subsided into its accustomed channels so soon as the immediate and urgent impulse given by the crown ceased to operate

Much of the wealth acquired from the various sources which have been indicated, was spent by King Solomon in building, and in the general improvement of the country. Many important towns and fortresses were built or rebuilt by him. Among these we find the name of Baalath, which has usually been supposed the same with Baalbec in the valley of Lebanon, the ruins of which have been so much admired and so often described by travellers. No one, indeed, supposes that the ruins which still exist are those of the very buildings erected by Solomon. These are known to have been of Roman origin; but it is conceived that the present ruins occupy the site of Solomon's city, and that some of the foundation walls, composed of enormous blocks of stone, may have belonged to ancient towns founded by him. The probability seems to be, that Baalbec does really occupy the site of one of the cities built by Solomon; but a writer in the 'Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature' (Art. BAAL-GAD) has shown the probability that this city was not Baalath, but Baal-Gad; and if so, its origin must be referred to times long anterior to those of Solomon, seeing that we read of "Baal-Gad in the valley of Lebanon, under Mount Hermon," so early as the days of Joshua (xi. 7; xii. 7; xiii. 5). In this case Solomon must be regarded as having rebuilt a city of more ancient date.

The Scripture directs our attention in a very marked manner to the arrangements of Solomon's court, not only as admirable in itself, but as being, in fact, the wonder and admiration of neighbouring, and even of remote nations. The statement to which we must look for giving some insight into these arrangements, contains at the first view little more than a list of names and offices; but on a closer inspection, persons acquainted with the existing usages of the East are able to recognise in this list much which is suggestive of an orderly arrangement and a wise distribution of administrative functions. It may, indeed, be noticed that most of the offices thus specified have reference to the supply of the wants of the court and the maintenance of the royal authority; and it must be admitted that these always have been practically the chief objects of Oriental governments. The list, as given in the sacred narrative, has rather a formal and official appearance. It begins,—"Solomon was king over all Israel," and then proceeds to enumerate the officers of his government.

We find, first, the HIGH-PRIEST Azariah, the grandson of Zadok; next are the SCRIBES, or secretaries, who were the two sons of Sheva, who had himself been sole scribe in the time of David. Their function is defined by the title of their office, as is that of the RECORDER, whose business appears to have been to register in the archives of the state the measures which the scribes were rather employed in expediting. The office of the CAPTAIN OF THE HOST, or Commander-in-chief of the forces, there has already been ample occasion to illustrate. His place at court was very high, and his influence, under certain circumstances, paramount. This is seen in the cases of Joab and Abner; but the power was greater in time of war and under warlike princes, than in peace and under such princes as Solomon; and hence we hear little of the captain of the host during his reign. The KING'S FRIEND seems to have been nearly such a person as we in our own history call the royal favourite, as distinguished from the responsible chief minister, although these functions were, and still are, often united in the same person. The favourite often held no public office, but more usually was found in possession of some important employment. The friend or favourite of David was Hushai, the Archite, and he was without any public office; but Solomon's friend, Zabad, who was a son of the prophet Nathan, was also "chief officer," which is supposed by some to denote the chief minister of state in the time of Solomon. The person described as being "next (or second) to the king" is commonly supposed to have been what we would call the prime minister. Solomon had no officer with this title; but his "friend," Zabad, is supposed to have occupied it under another title. The post of "second to the king" is that which Jonathan wished to occupy under David (1 Sam. xxiii. 17); and it is one of high antiquity in Eastern courts, being that Joseph occupied in Egypt, and Haman in the court of Persia. The office of ROYAL COUNSELLOR seems to have been distinct in itself, and not, as in England, connected with a public office. In the time of David the notorious Ahithophel was a royal counsellor; Hushai, the king's friend, another; and Jonathan, the king's uncle, another. We know little of their functions: but it seems to have been the general practice of the kings to follow the course which was approved by the general body of his council. Besides these, we find that there were managers of the crown property. We do not, indeed, discover them in the list of Solomon's officers, but they were among those of David, and were doubtless preserved by his son. The list then given is curious and interesting, as indicating the nature of the royal property apart from the revenues of state. Here we see distinct persons presiding over the vineyards, and over the wine which they



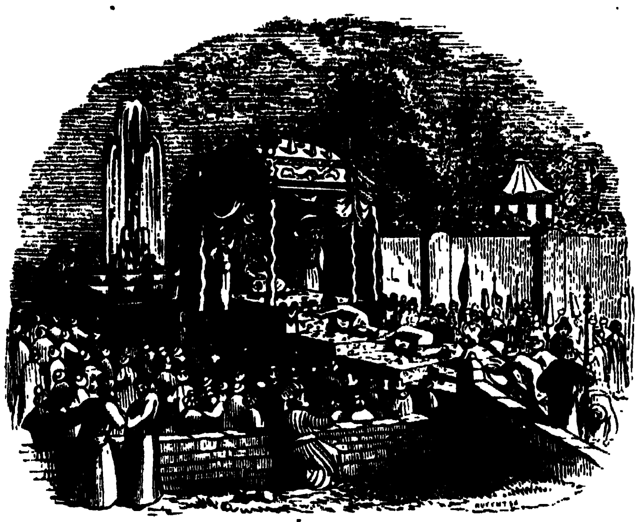
901.—Journey of an Abyssinian Queen.
Taith Brenhines Abyssinaidd.



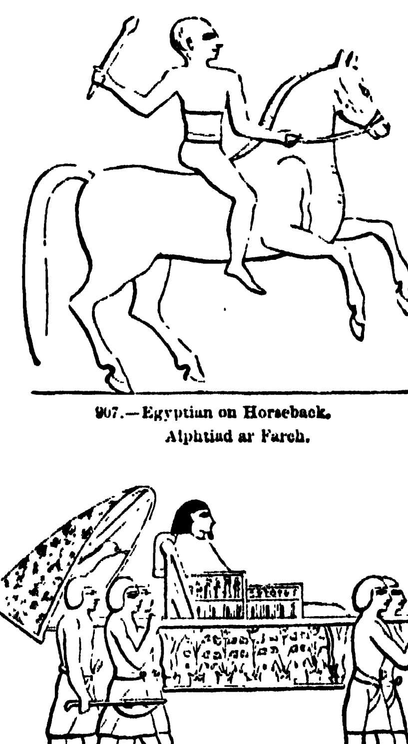
902.—Indian Canopy and Umbrella.
Gortho a Gwlawlen Indiaidd.



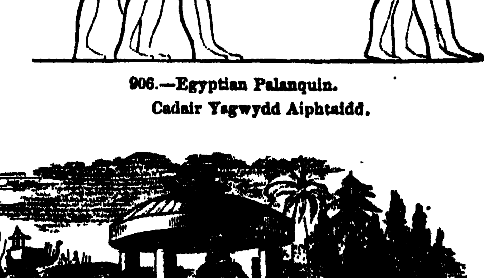
908.—Modern Oriental Cavalier.
Marchog Dwyreiniol Diweddar.



903.—Great Mogul on Throne.
Mogul Mawr ar Orsedd.



907.—Egyptian on Horseback.
Aiphtiad ar Farch.



906.—Egyptian Palanquin.
Cadair Ysgwydd Aiphtaidd.



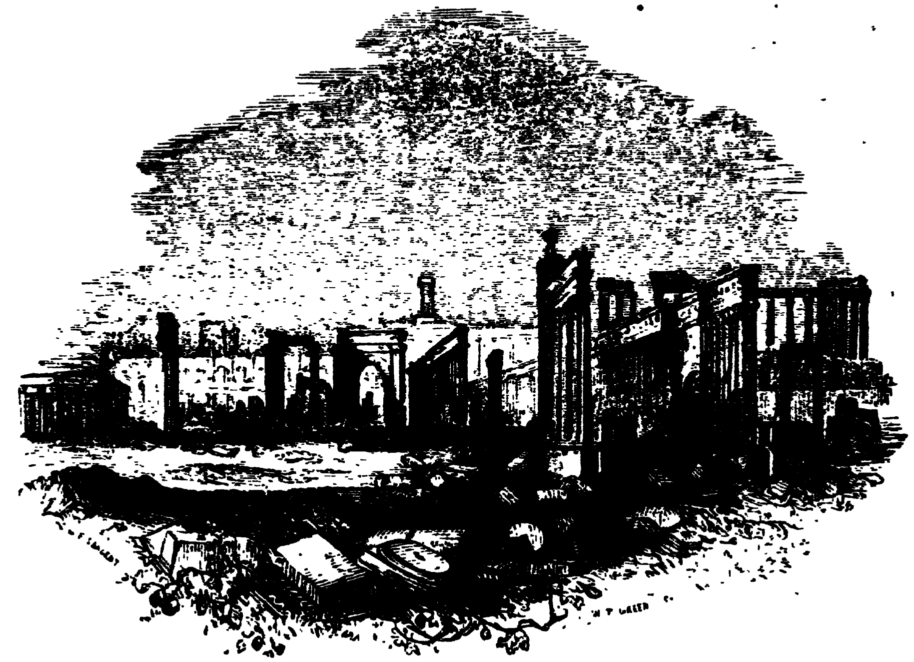
904.—Oriental State Dinner.
Ciniaw Brenhinol Dwyreiniol.



[illegible].—Howdah of an Indian Prince.
Howdah Tywysog Indiaidd.



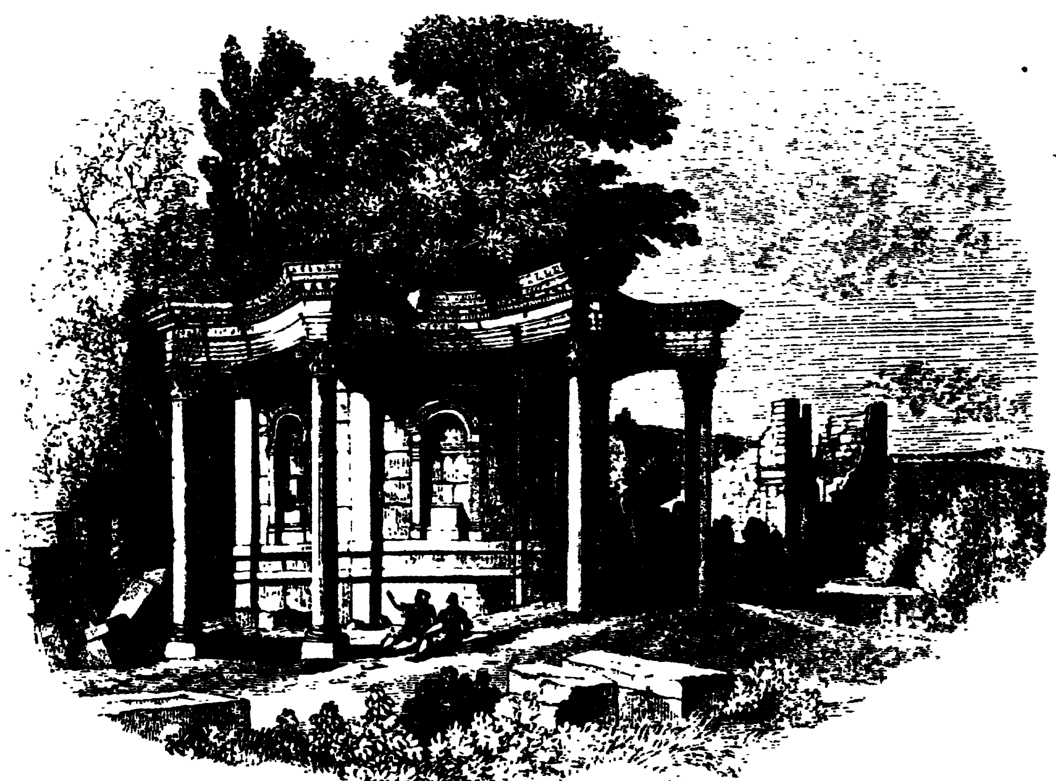
909.—Palmyra: near view of a Portion of the Ruins.
Palmyra: golygfa agos o Ran o'r Adfeilion.



911.—Tadmor—Palmyra.



910.—Palmyra: general view of the principal Ruins.
Palmyra: golygfa gyffredinol o'r prif Adfeilion.



912.—Temple at Baalbec. (Cassas.)
Teml yn Baalbec.

produced, as well as over the olive-yards, and over the cellars in which their precious oil was stored; and the fitness which was regarded in choice of persons to fill these offices is indicated in the fact that a native Arab was placed in charge of the flocks.

Several officers appear in the time of Solomon, of which we find no previous trace in Israel; of these were the "Governor of the Palace," who had charge of whatever belonged to the household affairs of the royal establishments; and the twelve "princes" who were stationed in different parts of the country to collect in turn from each tribe a month's provision for the court. These have been mentioned in a former page, and the extent and character of the supplies which they drew from the tribes have been indicated.

The orderly manner in which such vast quantities of provisions were brought together, distributed, and prepared for use, seems not less to have engaged the admiring wonder of strangers, and particularly of the Queen of Sheba, than the magnificent appointment and attendance at the king's own table.

We must be content to note very briefly a few other circumstances connected with the court of King Solomon. His chariots and horses, obtained from Egypt, have been already mentioned. As we are now well acquainted with the chariots of that country, there can be no doubt respecting their form and furniture. With regard to the horsemen our information is less distinct. There can be no doubt that Solomon had a body of cavalry mounted on trained Egyptian horses, and that such cavalry existed in Egypt. But it curiously happens that in the whole range of Egyptian sculpture and painting there is but one figure of a man on horseback (Fig. 907): and that does not much assist our ideas with respect to the cavalry of times so ancient. In all likelihood the equipments of Solomon's horsemen did not much differ from that which is and has long been in use in Western Asia, and which bears many marks of a remote origin. This is represented in Fig. 908.

Josephus reckons the number of Solomon's horses as twenty thousand; and he says that they were the most beautiful in their appearance, and the most remarkable for their swiftness, that could anywhere be seen. The riders, he says, were in their appearance quite worthy of their horses. They were young men in the beauty and flower of their age, and the tallest in stature that could be found in the country. Their undress was of Tyrian purple, and their long hair, which hung in loose tresses, glittered with the gold-dust wherewith they daily sprinkled their heads. But when they attended the king they were in complete armour, and had their bows ready strung. Often, in the fine season, he adds, the king rode down to his beautiful gardens at Etham, six miles from Jerusalem, attended by these young men. On such occasions, he rode loftily in his chariot, arrayed in white robes. But we have a better description of these excursions from the pen of Solomon himself. This occurs in Canticles iii. 6—11, where he is described as approaching in a splendid palanquin or litter, surrounded by threescore valiant men. The chorus of virgins dwells upon the subject of this litter with great admiration:—

"King Solomon hath made for himself
This couch of the wood of Lebanon,
Its pillars hath he made of silver,
Its bases of gold, its cushions of purple;
The middle of it is spread with love
By the daughters of Jerusalem."

The two last lines indicate that the bottom of the litter was spread with cushions, ornamented with flowers wrought in the most elegant manner by the damsels of Jerusalem. From the mention of pillars it appears to have had a covering or canopy, as is still usually the case. The only litter represented in the Egyptian paintings (Fig. 906) is borne by men, and has no canopy, the shade being supplied by an umbrella borne by an attendant. This article is so very ancient, that it was probably in some form or other known to the Hebrews. It is not, however, mentioned in Scripture, unless something of the kind is indicated in Psalm cxxi. 5; Cant. ii. 4: and if in use at all, it appears to have been regarded as a royal distinction, as is still the case in all parts of the East except China.

From the Song of Solomon much information respecting the arrangements of the royal harem may be gathered. And this is a matter of some consequence, as this king multiplied wives unto himself beyond any monarch before or after him. In fact, his female establishment resembled those which the kings of the East have in all ages desired to form: but it may be understood that the harem formed, properly speaking, a branch of the royal state or equipage, and was mainly designed to augment the pomp which belonged to his character and station. There can be no doubt, however, that the thing was wrong; for not only was it contrary to the law of nature that one man should keep so many women from their proper place in society as wives and mothers, but it was most strictly forbidden by the Hebrew legislator (Deut. xvii. 17), who foresaw such perilous consequences which, as we shall presently see, actually occurred in the case of Solomon. The women in Solomon's harem were not fewer than a thousand, of whom the Scripture counts seven hundred as wives, and three hundred as concubines. So large a body of women must have required the guardian care of a considerable number of eunuchs. Such persons are indeed not mentioned in the account of Solomon's establishments, but as we meet with them soon after in the harem of a comparatively unostentatious king, Joram (2 Kings ix. 32), we can scarcely suppose them wanting in that of Solomon.

In the midst of all these undertakings and operations, surrounded by all this glory and magnificence, Solomon's wisdom did not cease to be a matter of admiration, not only to his own subjects, but among neighbouring and even distant nations. So great was his knowledge, so wonderful in its variety and extent, that "there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, for all kings of the earth had heard of his wisdom." Among the princes who thus rendered their homage to the genius of Solomon was the Queen of Sheba, whom some suppose to have come from Abyssinia, but who is believed by others to have reigned in the southernmost parts of Arabia. She came with a very great and splendid retinue; and in her train were camels laden with spices, gold, and precious stones. It is stated that in her interviews with Solomon she "tried him with hard questions"—a mode of testing wisdom which was common in that age, and which every one who made unusual pretensions to sagacity and knowledge was understood to invite. The sage monarch found no difficulty in solving all the enigmatical questions which the royal stranger proposed: and we are told that "when the Queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house which he had built, and the food of his table, and the station of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, with their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his burnt-offerings, which he offered in the house of Jehovah, there was no more spirit in her, and she said to the king, "True was the report which I heard in my own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Yet that report I believed not till I came, and saw with mine own eyes; and, lo! the half had not been told me: thy wisdom and thy greatness far exceed the report that I heard. Happy thy men! happy these thy servants, who stand continually before thee and hear thy wisdom! Blessed be Jehovah thy God, who was so pleased with thee as to set thee on the throne of Israel!"

The great glory of Solomon's reign was greatly dimmed towards its close. Among the many wives he had taken unto himself were many women of neighbouring nations, "worshippers of strange gods." At their solicitation he was eventually led into allowing them the public exercise of their idolatries, and by easy steps was at length induced to take some part in them. Under what notions he disguised the heinousness of this crime to himself, we are not informed, and it is useless to conjecture. This grave and, under all the circumstances, astonishing offence is usually referred to the thirty-fourth year of Solomon's reign, and the fiftieth of his age. By this fall he forfeited the benefits and privileges which had been promised as the condition of his rectitude; and it was not long before the doom which he had so weakly and wickedly incurred was made known to him. This was, that his kingdom should be *rent* from him and given to his servant; but, tempering judgment with mercy, the Lord was pleased to promise that this great evil should not befal his house in his own reign, but in that of his son. This was for the sake of his father David; and for his sake also, who had derived so much satisfaction from the prospect which he had been allowed to indulge of the perpetuity of his race, it was further promised that the ruin of his dynasty should not be absolute, for that it should still reign over one tribe—that of Judah, with which that of Benjamin had by this time coalesced.

Nevertheless the troubles which were to end in the disruption of the kingdom which he had taken so much pains to organize, were allowed to commence in his own reign, and greatly to trouble its peace. He thus witnessed the growth of the baleful tree he had planted, although he was spared from gathering all its poisonous fruit. The threatened evils were made to grow out of the weak parts of his own policy. The foreign sources of wealth seem in the latter years of Solomon to have declined; and then, to support the disproportionate magnificence which he had established in his kingdom, he was obliged to lay upon his own subjects heavier burdens than they were able or willing to bear.

SUNDAY XXXVI.—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

BY the Jews, and the ancients generally, no provision was made in hospitals for the afflicted, or in almshouses for the poor. They were, therefore, dependent upon the charitable feelings of those who were in better circumstances. It thus became important that they should be placed where they could see many people; and hence it was customary to place them at the gates of rich men (see Luke xvi. 20); and they also sat by the side of the highway to beg where many persons would pass (Mark x. 46; Luke xviii. 35; John ix. 1—8). Under such circumstances the entrance to the temple became a favourite station for begging, not only from the great numbers of people who resorted thither, but because that, going up for the purposes of religion, they would be more disposed to give alms than at other times: and this was particularly true of the Pharisees, who, beyond all men, did their alms "to be seen of men."

Peter and John went up together to prayer at the temple, at the hour of afternoon prayer, being the ninth hour, or three o'clock. They entered by that large and splendid gate, made of Corinthian brass, near Solomon's porch, which bore the name of Beautiful. Here they observed a most afflicted creature, who had been lame from his birth, and who had for many years been carried daily to the Beautiful Gate, to ask alms of those that entered in at the temple. From this circumstance his person and condition were well known to the Jews, not only of Jerusalem, but of the country, who constantly attended the sacred services of the temple during their periodical visits to Jerusalem. Perceiving that he had attracted the notice of the apostles, the man asked alms of them. Peter said to him, "Look on us," with the view of drawing his attention to the act he was about to execute, so that the man might know him as the doer, and know that the benefit he was about to receive came from him. The beggar, expecting to receive some large alms, failed not to take heed to the apostle; but Peter, looking earnestly upon him, said, "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have, give I thee: In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Then, to show him that he was sincere in this strange command, and to induce him to make the required effort, he took the poor man by the right hand and assisted him to rise. Immediately his feet and ankle-bones received strength, and the man, who had never stood, walked—he who had never walked, ran—and not only ran, but leaped in the fulness of his joy, exulting and praising God.

The amazed and thankful man followed the apostles into the magnificent covered way or passage on the east side of the temple, which bore the name of Solomon's porch. Here a wondering crowd soon gathered around them, the people being greatly astonished to see the lame beggar whom they knew so well, and had just beheld lying at the temple gate, walking with so much agility among them. The abounding gratitude of the man failed not to point out his benefactors; and Peter, finding that he and his companion had thus become objects of marked attention, took occasion to proclaim aloud, that it was not by any power or virtue in themselves, but through the name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had slain, but whom God had raised from the dead, that this man had been healed. He admitted, however, that to a certain extent they had done this through ignorance, and assured them that the door of repentance was still open, and exhorted them to enter therein. To induce them to this, he went on to prove that this Jesus was the Messiah promised to the fathers—the seed of Abraham in whom all the families of men were to be blessed.

His discourse was interrupted by the chief priests, who had required the assistance of the guard in the tower of Antonia in dispersing the crowd. This guard was stationed there to preserve order and repress disturbances; and the priests resorted to this summary mode of arresting the impressions which seemed likely to be made by the discourse of Peter, taken in connection with the signal miracle which had been performed. The more effectually to secure their object, they seized the apostles and consigned them to the custody of the guard, till the next day; for it was now evening, and the council, before which the matter was to be brought, was not then sitting. When the conspiracy was against the Lord himself, the council could meet irregularly in the dead of the night; but this less important matter could abide the usual hours.

When Peter and John were the next day brought before the council, and asked, "By what power or in what name have ye done this?" Peter, who, when his Master had lately stood on his trial before this very tribunal, had shrunk with shameful timidity from his duty, was now filled with the Holy Spirit, and undauntedly seized the opportunity which the question offered, of declaring the truth, and of stating the evidence for the doctrine of Christ. The council were much struck by the boldness of the apostles, as well as by the matter of their address, especially as they perceived that they were uneducated and illiterate men. Certain members of the council then recollected that Peter and John were among those who had usually been seen in the company of Jesus, and knew that what was said by them concerning their Master was matter of authority, and would have weight with the people. It was also perceived that the man who had been healed was in attendance, ready to attest and extol his miraculous cure. Therefore, after some consultation, it was deemed prudent to let the matter drop, and to dismiss the apostles with an injunction not in future "to speak at all, or preach in the name of Jesus." But the apostles resolutely declined to give any such pledge, and were at length discharged with a warning as to their future course of proceedings. That they thus escaped was not owing to any want of inclination in the council to inflict punishment: but they knew that the popular feeling was in favour of the apostles, in consequence of the great and benevolent act which they had performed: "for all men glorified God for that which was done."

The liberated apostles returned to their companions, who received with joy the account of what had passed, and lifted up their voices in praise to God, who by the mouth of David (Psalm ii. 1) had foretold the things which had now come to pass: "And now, Lord," they concluded, "behold their threatenings; and grant unto thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus." When they had concluded, the place in which they sat was violently shaken, and as they were all at the same time filled with the Holy Ghost, they received this as a favourable answer to their prayer.

It has already been mentioned that there was a great anxiety among the more wealthy of the new converts to prevent their poorer brethren from feeling the pressure of want. They therefore sent in plentiful contributions, and selling their possessions, gave the price they brought to the apostles, who received it of them for the public use, and distributed to every one as his necessities required. Among these benevolent and faithful men, none distinguished himself more than one Joses, a Jew of Cyprus, of Levitical descent, who received from the apostles the appropriate surname of Barnabas (Son of Consolation), who sold a piece of land which formed his private property, and brought the full price of it to the apostles, that they might dispose of it according to their discretion. This man afterwards became eminent—second only to an apostle, and sometimes called an apostle, in the church. His conduct in this matter appears to be mentioned for the sake of painting the contrast which was offered by the conduct of another disciple, whose name was Ananias. This man was no doubt sincere in his convictions of the truth of the Christian religion; for the condition of the early church offered no inducement to a worldly man, and least of all to a Jew in good circumstances, to embrace its doctrines. Having joined himself to the disciples, he was not willing to appear behind the foremost in liberality and zeal: and yet his heart grudged the sacrifice which he had made from regard to appearances; and therefore, instead of bringing to the apostles the whole price of the land which he had sold, he kept back a considerable portion, and presented the remainder as if it had been the whole. How greatly was this man surprised and confounded when Peter, instead of receiving this offering with the expected approbation, plainly charged him with the fact, in terms of severe reprehension. The enormity of the offence was indeed very great; the meanness, the hypocrisy, the worldliness of the whole affair, is almost without known parallel; and had it been allowed to pass unpunished, the purity of the infant church could not long have remained free from the stain of worldly influences. That the act of selling the land was entirely voluntary on his part, and that even when sold the whole sum rested entirely at his disposal, were strongly urged upon him by Peter, to point out the enormity of an offence committed solely with a view to the praise of men, through an imposition upon the disciples and upon God. "Thou hast not lied," said the indignant apostle, "unto men, but unto God." This denouncement and exposure were instantly fatal to one so covetous of human praise. It came upon him with all the suddenness and effect of a thunderbolt, and he fell down and gave up the ghost.



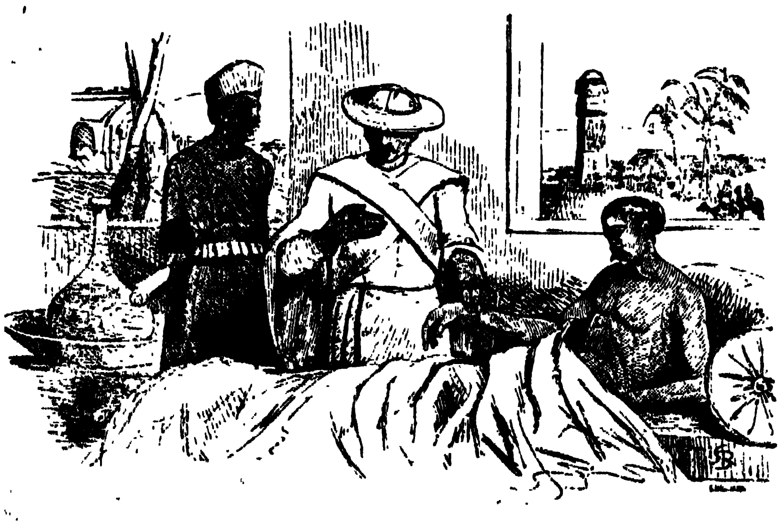
913.—The Death of Ananias.
Marwolaeth Ananïas.



914.—Solomon's Porch.
Porth Solomon.



915.—Martyrdom of St. Stephen.
Merthyrdod St. Stephan.



917.—A Physician in the East.
Physygwr yn y Dwyrain.



916.—Conversion of St. Paul.
Troedigaeth St. Paul.



920.—A dry Valley in Idumea. (Laborde.)
Dyffryn sych yn Idumea.



918.—Desolation of Job. (De Loutherbourg.)
Anddifadrwydd Job.



921.—Bedouin Robbers.
Ysbeilwyr Bedowiniaid.



919.—Bedouin Arabs.
Arabiaid Bedowinaidd.

JOB.



THIS is, in some respects, the most singular book in the Holy Scriptures, and is, perhaps, the one in the Old Testament by which the greatest amount of speculation has been excited. It is an argumentative and descriptive poem, with a prose introduction and conclusion, which forms the plot or story of the work. This story is very simple.

In the land of Uz lived Job, an upright and good man, who had seven sons and three daughters. He was the wealthiest man in the country; and the description of his wealth shows that the condition of life intended to be represented is patriarchal, similar to that led by Abraham, and similar to that now led by the Arabian Emirs; or rather to that intermediate condition in which the patriarch has a fixed residence, and cultivates the ground, without having relinquished the pastoral habits of life. Under this condition the homestead is permanent, cultivation surrounds it, and the necessary migrations of the flocks are performed under the care of sons and servants. This is the kind of life at one time led by Isaac (Gen. xxvi.); by Laban in Padan-aram, and by the churlish Nabal, whose flocks were sent forth to feed in the distant wilderness, while he abode in Maon, and had his agricultural possessions in Carmel (1 Sam. xxv.). Job had thus a mixed pastoral and agricultural property, seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred *yoke of oxen*, five hundred she-asses, and a great number of servants.

It was a custom of Job's sons, who were grown up and had separate establishments, to give each in his turn a feast to his brothers and family, and to this feast the three sisters were always invited. At the end of such feasts Job used to send for his children and purify them by ablution and other observances, apprehensive lest, in the gaiety of the festival, they might not have been duly mindful of God and his worship.

Leaving Job in this prosperous condition, the scenery next opens in an allegorical representation of the courts of heaven, where the sons of God—the angels—duly present themselves before the Most High. Among them appears Satan, the evil one, the accuser of the just, whose unusual presence is noted, and he is asked whence he came? He answers, "From wandering over the earth and walking up and down in it." He is then asked whether in these his wanderings over the earth, he had taken notice of the upright Job, whose integrity defied the powers of evil. Satan answered, with a sneer, that Job had good reasons for cultivating the service in which he throve so well; "but only put forth thine hand and touch whatever he possesseth, and to thy face will he renounce thee." On this Satan was permitted to try the virtue of Job to the extent of all his substance, but was not allowed to afflict his person.

The effect of this was soon seen. One day, when the children of Job were feasting, in due course, in the house of their eldest brother, a messenger came in alarm and haste to announce that the Arabians had fallen upon the oxen as they were ploughing in the field, and had driven them off, together with the asses, and that all the servants, except himself, had been put to the sword. This man had scarcely done relating the loss of Job's agricultural cattle, when another came in equal alarm to announce that his flocks, together with his shepherds, had been destroyed by lightning from heaven. Then another swiftly followed to relate that the Chaldæans had driven off his camels, and destroyed those who had the charge of them. Only one thing was then wanting to complete Job's desolation, and that came too soon: another terrified messenger arrived to tell that the house in which his sons and daughters were feasting had been blown down by the winds of heaven, and all had perished in that overthrow. On hearing this, the desolate man arose and performed the usual acts of a mourner. He rent his mantle and shaved his head: but the strength of his soul was not broken; he fell upon the ground and worshipped God, saying, "Naked came I forth from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither. Jehovah gave, and Jehovah hath taken away: blessed be the name of Jehovah." It is then added, that "in all this," that is, up to this time, "Job sinned not, and uttered nothing rash against Jehovah."

Again we are conducted to the gates of heaven, and behold the Lord rejoicing over the uprightness of his servant, and in the utter defeat of Satan's devices against him. But Satan suggested that all other calamities were light compared with those which took away ease of body and threatened life. Job had indeed come forth from the trial which made him poor and had taken the lives of others: "But," he said, "put forth thy hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and to thy face he will renounce thee." But God had confidence in his servant, and said, "Behold, he is in thy hand, but spare his life."

In consequence of this, Job was speedily afflicted with a grievous disease which rendered him loathsome to himself, and an object of pity to others. This disease is judged to have been that species of leprosy called elephantiasis, or elephant disease, so called from its covering the skin with dark scales, and swelling the mouth, legs, and feet to an enormous size, although the body is at the same time emaciated. The pain is said not to be very great in this disease; but there is a great debility of the system, with much uneasiness and grief. Being in the first stage of the disease covered with sore boils, "from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot," the afflicted man—so lately "the greatest of all the men of the East"—sat down mournfully among the ashes, with a potsherd to scrape his sores.

In this state of affairs, Job's wife next appears upon the scene. She says to Job, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Renounce God and die." This was the very object that Satan himself had in view,—to induce him to renounce his confidence in God through the greatness of his losses and the poignancy of his sufferings. But the trust of Job was still firm, and he rebuked her in the words: —"Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What! shall we receive good at the hands of God, and shall we not receive evil?" And here again, the author pointedly remarks, "In all this," that is, "thus far," "Job sinned not with his lips."

The tidings of the great calamities which had befallen Job ere long reached his distant friends, some of whom set out to give him comfort; Bildad the Temanite, from Teman of Edom; Eliphaz the Shuhite, from the country east of the Jordan; and Zophar, from some unknown place or city called Naamah. These three persons after their journey drew near his once prosperous and pleasant home: and they beheld their friend at a distance at which they could once have easily recognised him. Disease had so altered his appearance that at first sight they knew him not; but when they found that the wretched object before them was no other than Job, "they lifted up their voice and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads towards heaven." This mode of expressing their grief forcibly brings to mind that of Achilles when informed of the death of Patroclus (*Iliad*, xviii. 2—27):—

> "A sudden horror shot through all the chief,
> And wrapped his senses in the cloud of grief;
> Cast on the ground, with furious hands he spread
> The scorching ashes o'er his graceful head;
> His purple garments, and his golden hairs,
> Those he deforms with dust, and these he tears;
> On the hard soil his groaning breast he threw,
> And rolled and grovelled, as to earth he grew."—POPE.

They then "sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights:—*and none spake a word unto him, for they saw that his grief was very great.*" This conduct of theirs is so different from that usually pursued under such circumstances, that we are prepared by it to entertain a very favourable opinion of their discretion and right feeling. Seven days, it will be observed, was the customary time of mourning among the Orientals: but we are not to understand that they remained in the same place and posture during all the seven days, but that they mourned with him during all that time in the usual manner.

At the end of the seven days of mourning, when no hopes of recovery from his afflicted condition were entertained by Job, and not a word of consolation had been offered by his friends—who in their hearts believed that he was suffering for his sins, and that the displeasure of God was manifested against him—he then unburdened his heart in the language of complaint, lamentation, and despair.

The author has been mindful to secure the sympathies of the reader in behalf of Job by the introductory chapter upon the cause of his afflictions; and by the declaration that he was an upright and good man: so that in this place, and throughout the poem, we are more inclined to pity him for his afflictions than to censure him for his intemperate language. We now see the reason why the author had before marked that he "sinned not with his lips," nor uttered anything rashly against Jehovah: for after the seven days, he constantly sins with his lips, and utters rash things against Jehovah. The proverbial "patience of Job" is also founded upon his conduct as described in the introduction to the poem; for after the seven days, when he begins with—"Let the day perish in which I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived"—nothing can well be more impatient than his utterances.

SUNDAY XXXVII.—BIBLE HISTORY.

THIS bred discontent among them, and prepared them to lend a greedy ear to any adventurer who might hold forth the hope of relief or deliverance. The small neighbouring nations also began to recover the strength of which they had been shorn in the time of David; and, as they also were oppressed by increased exactions, they began to be troublesome, and wanted but an opportunity of shaking off a yoke which had become intolerable.

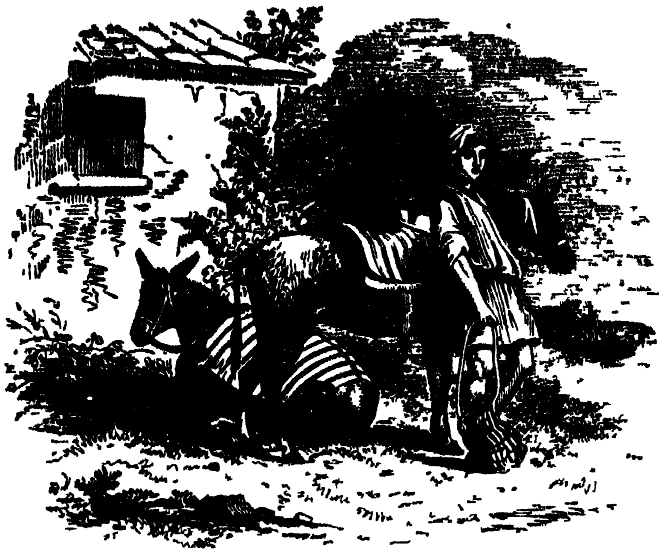
A lad named Hadad, son of the prince of Edom, whose forces Joab had subdued, had been conveyed away by some faithful adherents to Egypt, which seems in that and following ages to have been the general refuge of distressed princes. He was there brought up in the palace with the king's sons, and eventually received one of the royal princesses in marriage, and obtained an establishment suited to his rank and pretensions. Here, during many years, he remained watching the course of events. For a long time he could discern no prospect of good for his royal house or for his enslaved country: but, finding, at length, that the king of Israel was by his private conduct and arbitrary government rapidly losing the esteem of his own subjects, Hadad deemed that the time was come for him to act, and hastened to quit the luxuries and honours of Egypt in pursuit of the adventure which seemed to open to him. He found the Hebrew government in Edom too firm to be disturbed at this time: but he formed an alliance with a freebooter named Rezon, by whose aid he ascended the throne of the kingdom of Zobah, near Damascus, which he made a nucleus of opposition and annoyance to the Hebrew government. The names of these two adventurers, Hadad and Rezon, appear to great advantage among the chiefs of Syria, who took up arms to recover the territory wrested from their countrymen by the arms of David; and it seems that, although they were unable at that time to deprive the Hebrew crown of its foreign dependencies, they made frequent incursions into the Jewish territories, and inflicted much loss and damage even in the lifetime of Solomon. The brief hints which are given of their history are, indeed, suggestive of much speculation on the relations of the states east and north-east of Palestine in the time of Solomon: and, in the midst of this, one fact shines out with remarkable distinctness, which is that Hadad became in Syria the founder of a greater dynasty than that which he left Egypt to re-establish. The capital of his kingdom was soon exchanged for Damascus, and he was the first of those sovereigns of Damascene-Syria who afterwards gave so much trouble to Israel, and long waged with it an equal and often triumphant warfare. The succeeding princes of this kingdom delighted to take the name of Ben-hadad from their gifted and warlike founder and forefather.

In Israel itself there was a young man of Ephraim, named Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, whom the king—skilful to recognise and prompt to reward talent—had distinguished for the great abilities which he had manifested in some inferior employment, and promoted to the important office of warden of the fortifications which had recently been drawn around Jerusalem. This was the man who was chosen by the providence of God to be ruler of the ten tribes about to be severed from the house of David. When this important communication was made to him by the prophet Ahijah, the manner in which he received it, and in which he proceeded even too hastily to act upon it, seems to show that his thoughts had already taken the direction to which the charge of the prophet imparted a divine sanction. He rose to the greatness of his destinies with amazing facility; the alacrity of his movements far outstripped the divine intentions concerning him; and in a premature attempt to kindle the flames of civil war, he found that the attachment of the Hebrew nation to the house of David was too strong to allow him any present hope of success, and was himself constrained to flee to Egypt, where he was protected by Shishak, the Pharaoh of that age, who was well disposed to encourage such designs as might tend to weaken his powerful neighbour.

Events like these could not fail to be contemplated with great uneasiness by a monarch whose penetration into men's motives would but too clearly anticipate the issue to which they tended; impressing upon his mind the melancholy conviction that he was about to leave to his son Rehoboam a tottering throne, and perhaps a disputed succession. Whether these convictions had any salutary effect upon him; whether in his latter days he repented of the error and wrong doing which had brought so many calamities upon him; does not appear in the Scriptural accounts. It is to be hoped that in his last days he saw the evil of the courses he had so unhappily taken, and humbled himself before God for his sins against him, although he was unable, even by repentance, to avert their consequences, or, in the small fragment of life which was left him, to repair the errors of a long reign. After he had occupied for forty years the throne of Israel he died—before he had attained old age, but not before he had survived the respect of the pious and the confidence of the faithful among his subjects (B.C. 975). It is remarkable that in the vision at Gibeon with which his reign so auspiciously commenced, wealth and power, together with wisdom, were promised to him absolutely, but "length of days" only on condition of faithfulness and obedience.

Profiting by the experience they had gained, the tribes resolved to obtain, at the commencement of the new reign, some security from the crown against the renewal of the arbitrary and exhausting exactions to which they had been subjected under Solomon. To give more force to their demand, they recalled Jeroboam from Egypt, with the apparent view that the new king might be reminded of the prudence of conciliation by the presence of one whose pretensions were by this time well known, and were so inimical to the house of David. Fortified by the presence of Jeroboam, the elders of Israel repaired to Rehoboam, and demanded that he should lighten the heavy yoke which his father had laid upon their shoulders. This was a great crisis in the affairs of Israel, and the son of Solomon was by no means equal to its exigencies. A prompt and gentle answer might have gone far, in human probabilities, to avert the calamity which impended over the house of David. But he took time to consider his answer, and then—by the advice of the young and untried counsellors, who had been the associates of his youth, and contrary to the entreaties of the sage personages who had gained experience in his father's court—he "answered them roughly," urging to the utmost stress his royal prerogative. At the time appointed for returning an answer to the demand, he told the delegates that, so far from relieving them from the burdens of which they complained, he would, if he liked, double them; and that instead of chastising them, as his father had done, leniently, with whips, he would chastise them with torturing scorpions:—a name given to a scourge of thongs set with sharp points or nails. On receiving this rash, ill-advised, and most foolish answer, the tribes, as might be expected, openly renounced their allegiance to the house of David, and made Jeroboam king. Only Judah, the native tribe of David, adhered to the infatuated king, and with it Benjamin, which was united to Judah by the tie of a common interest in Jerusalem. Thus came to a head the long-standing rivalry between the great tribes of Judah and Ephraim. The latter, which could ill brook the pre-eminence which Judah had obtained, and which exercised a commanding influence among the other tribes, had now a king of its own, and had become the chief member of a separate and independent monarchy.

In the division which thus took place, the northern kingdom, henceforth called that of Israel, took with it all the foreign possessions which had belonged to the united monarchy lying to the east and north-east of the Jordan and Dead Sea; and Judah only retained Edom on the south-east, and Philistia on the west. This disproportion of territory was somewhat rectified by Judah's possession of Jerusalem and the temple, together with the treasure of Solomon, and great resources in the vast quantities of precious metals which had been lavished on the fabric of the Temple, and on the royal palaces and their armories. The importance of this possession in equalizing the balance of power between the two kingdoms would have been still greater, if the Temple had continued, according to its original intention, and as the first principles of the theocratical establishment imperatively required, the great centre of union to all the tribes, who were bound to repair thither at the three yearly festivals; and who were all under the obligation of contributing to the support of the ecclesiastical establishment which had its seat in that city. This source of advantage was however speedily taken away by Jeroboam, who apprehended that his dynasty would be of very short duration if his subjects continued to frequent Jerusalem, and to regard the metropolis of the house of David as the prime seat of those institutions which all true Israelites deemed their greatest glory. To prevent this, and under the pretext that the journey was too distant for his people to take so often, Jeroboam set up two golden calves as symbolical images of Jehovah. This was an imitation of the Apis and Mnevis of the Egyptians, among whom he had so long been an exile, influ-



922.—Modern Egyptian Asses saddled.
Asynod yr Aipht Ddiweddar cyfrwyedig.



925.—The King's Daughter.
Merch y Brenin.



926.—Shishak, King of Egypt.—Thebes.
Sisac, Brenin yr Aipht.



927.—Arabian Lion.
Llew Arabaidd.



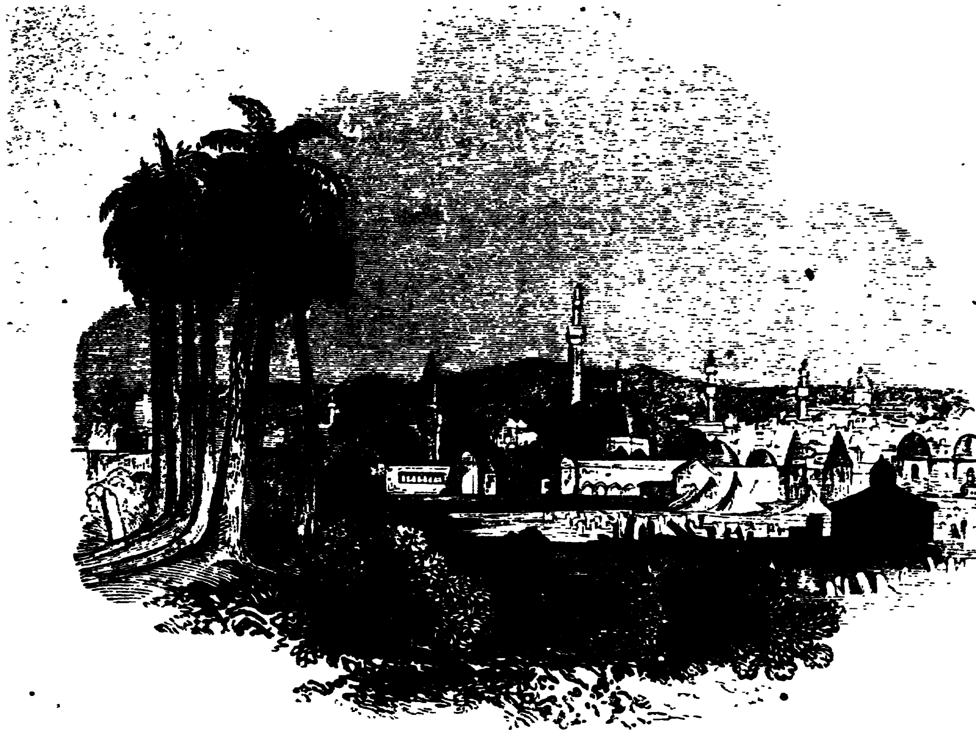
923.—Damascus.



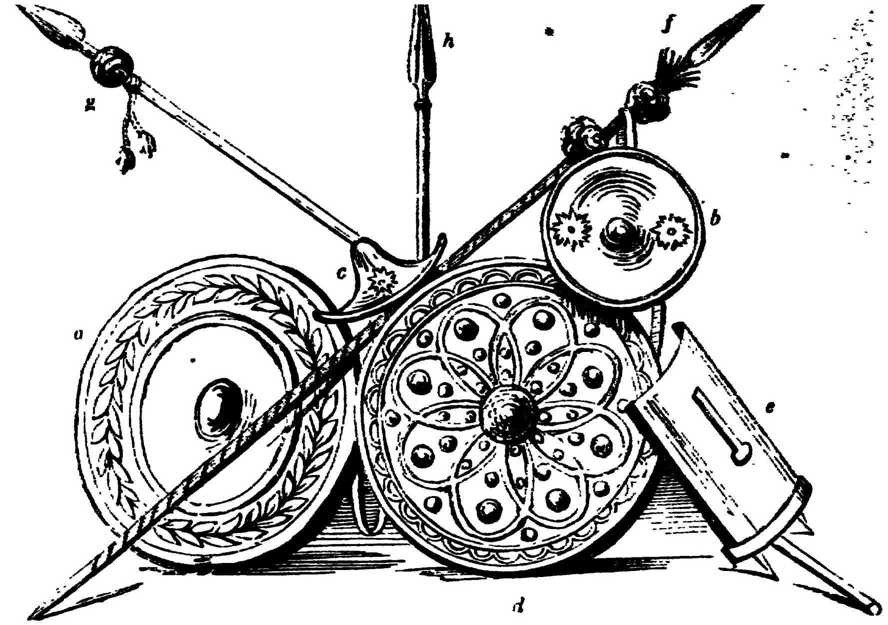
924.—Baalbec.



[illegible]—Ahijah and the Wife of Jeroboam. [illegible]
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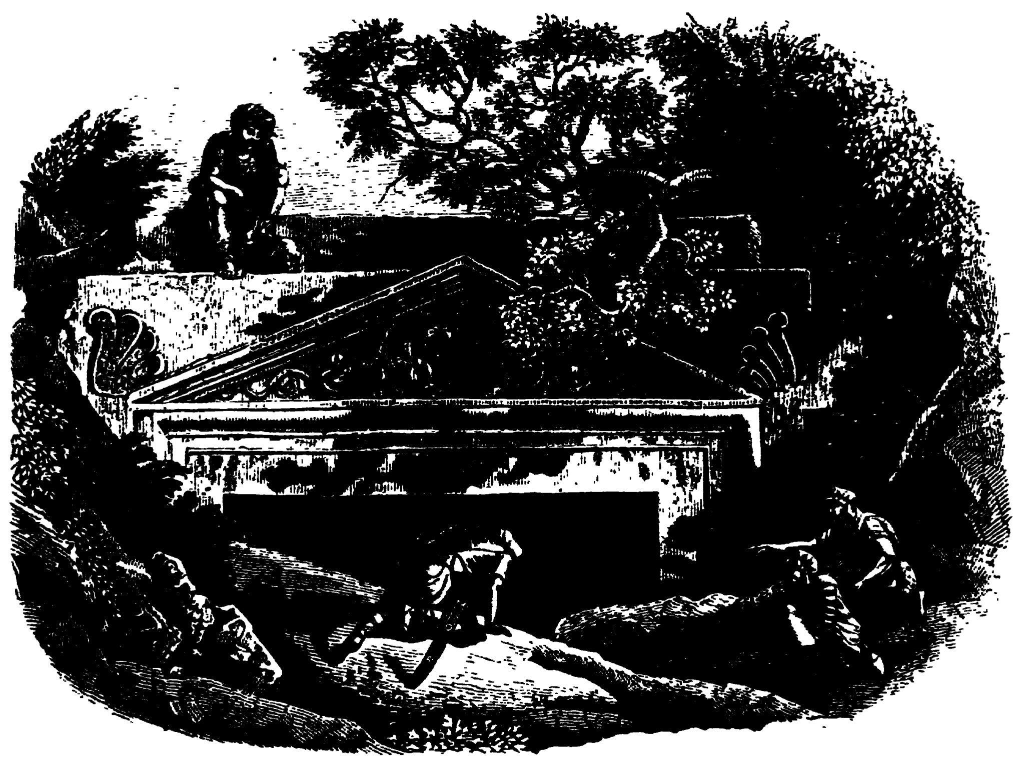


931.—Damascus. (From Laborde's 'Syria.')



929.—Modern Oriental Shields and Spears.
a, large Arabian Shield; *b*, small do.; *c*, side view of the same; *d*, large Turkish Shield; *e*, Mameluke Shield; *f*, Arabian Spear; *g*, Turkish; *h*, Mameluke.

Tarianau a Gwaywffyn Dwyreiniol Diweddar.
a, Tarian Arabaidd fawr; *b*, un fechan; *c*, golygfa ochrol arni; *d*, Tarian Dyrcaidd fawr; *e*, Tarian Famelue; *f*, Tarian Arabaidd; *g*, Dyrcaidd; *h*, Famelue.



932.—Tomb of the Kings of Judah in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. (Cassas.)



930.—Samaria.—Sebaste. (From Laborde's 'Syria.')

enced no doubt by the recollection of the tendency which the Israelites had of old time, and under the very shadow of Sinai, manifested of worshipping Jehovah through the symbol of the ox-god of Egypt. This was a grievous error, a schism, an idolatry—but it was not a turning aside after false gods, and therefore, although mentioned always with severe reprehension as a departure from the vital principles of the theocracy, is not condemned as an utter apostacy, or censured with the same degree of horror as we find on other occasions called forth by the idolatrous worship of Baal and Moloch. Under the figures of the golden calves, the true God was the ostensible object of worship; but when the Israelites turned aside after Baal, Ashtaroth, and the idols of their neighbours, other gods than Jehovah became the ostensible objects of worship, and a different and heavier measure of judgment was meted out to the worshippers.

One of the golden calves was placed in Bethel, for the southern tribes, and the other in Dan for the tribes of the north. Temples were built and altars erected for these idols; priests were appointed from all the tribes without distinction, no regard being had to the prerogative of the Levites, who indeed refused to serve, and in general abandoned such of their cities as lay in this kingdom, and went to establish themselves in Judah. Indeed the king himself seems to have assumed the dignity of high-priest, in imitation of the Egyptian kings; or at least claimed the right of exercising priestly functions at the high festivals. These festivals were the same as those the Mosaical law enjoined; for the king dared not interfere with institutions which had become so much identified with the habits of the people; but he placed them a month later than the times fixed by the law, in order to establish a distinction between them and the same festivals as celebrated in the rival kingdom.

The policy on which these alterations were founded seemed so essential to the prevention of the reunion of the severed tribes, and the alterations themselves became in the course of a few generations so thoroughly interwoven with the constitution, and with the habits of the people, that even the more pious of Jeroboam's successors did not venture, if they wished, to abolish them, and to restore in their original form and vigour the theocratical institutions.

Jeroboam was not allowed to proceed in the course he had taken without warning or reproof. At one of the periodical festivals (that of Tabernacles), while Jeroboam was in the act of performing the priestly function of offering incense before the golden calf in Bethel, a prophet of God from Judah made his appearance, and denounced the unholy service, and the altar at which it was performed, declaring that the altar should, as in the distant future, be polluted and cast down by a king of Judah—Josiah by name. And in proof of the authority by which he spake, the altar, at his word, was rent and its ashes strewed around. The king was moved only to rage at a message so full of mysterious and significant import, and he stretched forth his hand to seize the messenger of evil. But the arm was smitten with sudden paralysis, and lost its strength and motion, until the prophet interceded for him.

Unhappily, the conduct of the prophet himself threw some discredit on his mission, and probably intercepted in some minds the convictions which it was calculated to produce. He had been enjoined to return into Judah immediately after discharging his message; and, on pain of death, to abstain from taking food in the polluted land. He accordingly left Bethel without delay. But when the news of the transactions had been communicated to an old seer, of corrupt principles, who seems to have had some interest in the new arrangements, he feared that much injury might accrue to them unless he could in some way contrive to shake the credit of the messenger. He, therefore, caused his ass to be saddled and rode after him. He found him resting under the shade of an oak, and urged him to return and accept the hospitalities of his house; and when the prophet stated the divine command under which he acted, the other declared that he also was a prophet of Jehovah, and had been specially charged to entertain him. On this the prophet consented to return, and he remained with the old Bethelite until the next morning. He then departed, but had not gone far from Bethel when he paid the forfeit of his disobedience. He was met and slain by a lion; and, as if to evince the special judgment of his punishment, the lion continued to stand by without attempting to mutilate the body, or to injure the ass on which the unhappy man had been riding. When this was told to the false seer in Bethel, he went and fetched the body to give it honourable burial, and commanded his sons that when he died his corpse should be laid in the same place. He foresaw that the doom denounced by the slain prophet should come to pass; and he probably desired that his bones, by being commingled with those of Jehovah's prophet, might be spared the dishonour which the distant king was to inflict upon the remains of the priests and seers of this abomination.

But Jeroboam had another warning through an agent who was entitled to his highest respect. His eldest son, Abijah, a young prince of high promise, being taken with an alarming sickness, the anxious father prevailed upon the queen to disguise herself in the attire of a private person, and repair to Shiloh, where the prophet Ahijah, who had announced to him his appointment to the kingdom, had then his abode, to inquire of him concerning the fate of their child. As the eyes of the old prophet were dim through age, she might the more readily hope to escape detection; but the whole matter was on the instant made known to Ahijah, who, when she appeared at the door, accosted her with the ominous words, "Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam, for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings." Heavy indeed were they, amounting to nothing less than the utter extirpation of the race of Jeroboam, doomed to untimely deaths in the city and in the field; and the speedy extinction and disgrace of the dynasty which he had taken so much politic care and incurred so much guilt to establish on firm foundations. "Arise thou, therefore," concluded the prophet, "get thee to thine own house, and when thy feet enter the city the child shall die. And all Israel shall mourn for him and bury him; for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel."

Everything happened as he had said; but the warning was lost upon Jeroboam, who, perhaps, felt that he had gone too far to recede in the line of policy which he had taken.

It is now time to return to Rehoboam, who could not without great concern see his kingdom torn from him, and so large a proportion of his subjects place themselves under the sceptre of one of his father's servants. His first measure was to assume that the tribes were still under his sway, and sent to collect the usual "tributes," or taxes; but the people rose upon the chief collector, and stoned him to death. Rehoboam then thought only of war, and finding that the nobles of Judah were disposed to second his views, he speedily raised an army of 180,000 men to reduce the ten tribes to their allegiance. But when he was ready to take the field, the prophet Shemaiah was moved by the Divine Spirit to forbid the prosecution of the design, seeing that the matter was from the Lord. Rehoboam obeyed, and disbanded his army, which was certainly a very signal act of obedience. He then turned his attention to putting his own kingdom in a condition of defence. He fortified his towns, repaired his strongholds, and provided in abundance all the munitions of war in every point which seemed open to attack. The migration into his territory of the Levites, as well as of a large number of families which were discontented with the new order of things established by Jeroboam, soon put his kingdom nearly on a level with the other in population, inferior as it was in territory. And this, with the possession of the capital and its treasures by Judah, soon put the kingdoms on a more equal footing than the difference in the number of tribes and in extent of dominion would suggest.

Jeroboam was, however, too much occupied with the affairs we have described to care to molest Rehoboam; but it is not unlikely that it was partly at his instance that his friend Shishak was induced to invade Judah with an immense army. The preparations of Rehoboam to meet this formidable attack were vigorous and well considered; but, unhappily for his kingdom, he had by this time rendered himself obnoxious to the divine displeasure by imitating the idolatrous usages of the heathen. He was, therefore, deprived of the divine assistance, on which he might otherwise have securely calculated, and no resource was left to him but the submission which the prophet Shemaiah recommended, as to a punishment inflicted by heaven for his offence. The plunder of the treasures of Solomon seems to have been the main object of this expedition. The Egyptian king entered the sacred capital of Judah and stripped the palace of its most splendid furniture, and the temple of the vast treasures which had been there accumulated by David and Solomon. He also took away the golden shields which the latter of these monarchs had fabricated for his guards; in place of which Rehoboam was obliged to be contented with substituting others of brass.

The marked emphasis with which this circumstance is mentioned by the sacred historian brings to mind the equal emphasis with which this part of Solomon's magnificence had previously been described. There were two hundred large shields of beaten gold, each weighing six hundred shekels, and three hundred smaller shields of the same costly material, and of half the weight. Their forms we can only guess from comparison with the shields of other ancient nations; but there is every reason to conclude that the workmanship was worthy of the materials, and that the shields of Solomon might vie, if not with the shield of Achilles, at least with some of the most magnificent of those which ancient poets and historians have described to us.

SUNDAY XXXVII.—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

SAPPHIRA, the wife of Ananias, entered the place about three hours afterwards, before the meeting had separated. She was ignorant of what had happened, but appears to have taken an active part, if her suggestions did not originate the infamous transaction. Of her, Peter, with marked emphasis, asked whether the land had been sold for the sum which Ananias had named: she readily and unhesitatingly answered in the affirmative, on which Peter, with the sternness of a judge, said:—"How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them who have buried thy husband are at the door—and shall carry thee out." On hearing these terrible words, she also fell to the ground and died; on which the young men who had just returned from burying her husband, carried her also away. The manner of the death of Sapphira was even more striking than that of Ananias. Peter had not distinctly doomed him to death; and he might be supposed to have died from the stroke of an over-burdened conscience; but in the other case the direct judgment of God is brought out more distinctly. Sapphira dies at the word of Peter, and falls down death-struck at his command.

This signal judgment made a profound impression upon the church. It tended to purge away all low and selfish motives; to urge great singleness of purpose, and to induce that respect for the power and authority of the apostles which was essential to their influence. It seems however to have tended for a time to prevent other men of substance from joining the apostles: but, it is added with strong emphasis —"but *the people* magnified them." Many miracles were also wrought by them; and their reputation became so high "that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them." Whether they were by this means healed is not stated, and is left for us to conjecture. The news of this even spread to the neighbouring towns, whence the diseased were brought in great numbers to Jerusalem to be cured by the apostles. The sensation which was thus excited attracted the attention of the high-priest and others, and by their orders the apostles were apprehended and cast into the common prison. But the night following they were delivered by an angel of God, who opened the prison-doors and brought them forth, with a charge to proceed in their high course, speaking boldly to the people in the very temple the words of eternal life. Next morning the Sanhedrim assembled to examine the prisoners, and officers were sent to bring them forth. But they soon returned, stating that the prisoners had disappeared, although the prison-doors were still closed, and the keepers carefully upon guard. While they were confounded at this, a messenger arrived with the intelligence that the men whom they had cast into prison were then actually in the temple exhorting the people. The officers then went and brought them thence before the council; but they did this without disrespect or violence, as they feared to excite a tumult among the people, who were, as we have seen, favourable to the apostles, and had probably just heard from them how marvellously they had been delivered.

On their appearance before the council, the high-priest taxed them with disobedience to the positive order they had received no more to preach in the name of Jesus: "But, behold," said the pontiff, "ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." To this Peter, in the name of all the apostles, quietly answered, "We ought to obey God rather than men;" and forthwith, in a few cogent words, stated without reserve or qualification the great doctrine which they, as chosen witnesses, felt bound to testify. They were then taken outside for a time, while the council deliberated on the matter. Some of the more violent were for putting them to death; but there was among them a renowned teacher and expounder of the law, named Gamaliel, who urged more prudent counsels. He sagaciously observed, that if this doctrine were of God they could not and ought not to interfere to suppress it, and if it were not of God it would certainly without their interference come to nothing. He therefore counselled the great "let alone" policy; and his high reputation and influence gained so much attention for it, that, after they had scourged the apostles, they allowed them to depart with an injunction that they should not again speak in the name of Jesus. But the apostles, rejoicing that they were deemed worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus, ceased not to preach Christ crucified in the temple and in every house they entered. And their labours were blessed of God: for the number of the disciples daily increased, and the funds which their liberality and confidence placed in the hands of the apostles were so large, that the distribution became a matter of great anxiety and labour to them, and there was danger that this business would so take up their time as to prevent the due discharge of more important duties. A dispute which arose between the Hellenistic and Hebrew converts, the former alleging that their widows were comparatively neglected in the daily ministrations, convinced the apostles that it was time for them to seek relief from such comparatively secular charges. "It is not meet," said they, "that we should leave the word of God and serve tables." They therefore recommended the brethren to look out seven men in whom they could confide—pious and prudent men—who might have the management of this department. Seven such persons were accordingly nominated by the disciples, and were instituted by the apostles in this important office by prayer and the imposition of hands. These were the first deacons. One of them, named Stephen, was so active and so devoted, so powerful in speech, and so mighty in deeds, that he speedily attracted the attention of the Hellenistic and African Jews in Jerusalem: and in their frequent disputations he so foiled them in argument, that they became exasperated, and determined to get rid of him. Despairing to do this in the ordinary course of affairs, as then conducted under the cognizance of the Romans, they suborned false witnesses to testify that they had heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God. On this allegation they excited the people against him, and then the chief men ventured to seize him and to bring him before the council. The charge was there more formally urged; and when the council turned their attention to the man against whom such heinous things were urged, they beheld a man whose countenance was radiant with holiness and peace—"as it had been the face of an angel."

To the question of the high-priest, "Are these things so?" Stephen answered by taking a rapid view of the dispensations of God's providence towards his people, with an apparent view to the development of the Messianic character of Christ as foreshown in these dispensations. We say apparent, for, as his address was interrupted by the excited passions of the audience, its entire scope is not clearly manifested. He had reached so far in his illustrative exposition as to the building of the temple by Solomon, when he was much interrupted by the angry clamour of the audience, and was provoked to exclaim:—"Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain those who showed before the coming of the Just One, of whom ye have now been the betrayers and murderers. Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it."

When the audience had heard thus far their rage and indignation passed all bounds, and they even gnashed on him with their teeth. Then, foreseeing his danger, and feeling that there was no safety even in the great council of the nation, nor any prospect of justice at its hands, the holy man cast his eyes towards heaven, and there beheld "the glory of God." This phrase usually denotes the visible symbols of the Divine Presence in some magnificent representation, or some resplendence—such as that which in the old temple abode between the cherubim. In Stephen's case there is every indication of a vision representing what was most likely to encourage him in that perilous moment, "the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." He declared what he beheld; and on hearing this, the auditors cried out with one voice, and stopped their ears as against the pollution of some horrid blasphemy, and ran upon him with one accord. He was hurried outside the city, and there in the madness of that hour stoned to death as a blasphemer. He died calling upon God, and saying "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," and praying that this act might not be laid to the charge of his murderers. Thus worthily died the first of the noble army of martyrs, who have sealed with their blood the testimony of Jesus.

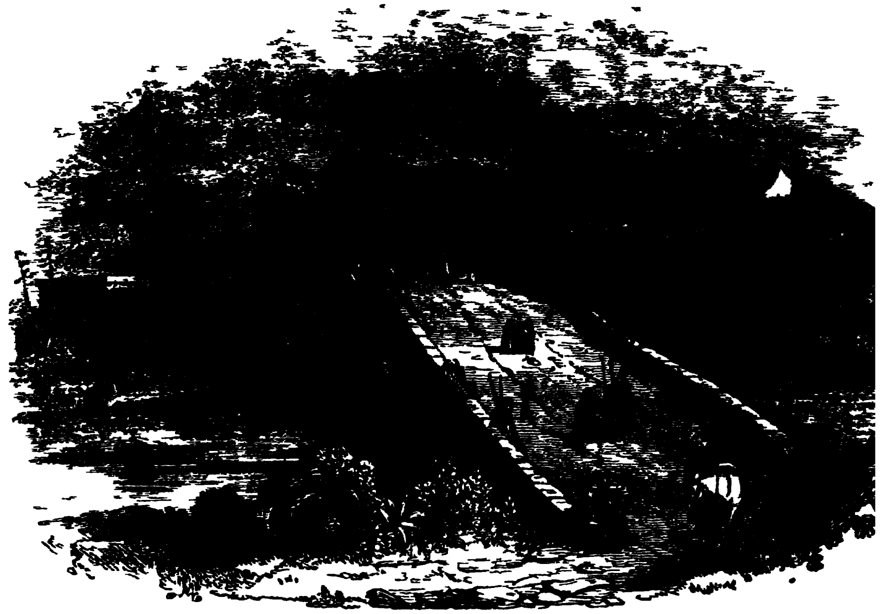
The council had no power to inflict death, as we have already seen: and although this proceeding could not have been displeasing to them, it had not their formal sanction; but was entirely the ebullition of popular feeling, which would not and could not abide the result of judicial movements. In this case the witnesses, as was usual, took the first and most active part in the execution; and casting off their outer robes for vigorous exertion, they placed them in charge of a young man named Saul, who had manifested much zeal against the new doctrines, and on the present occasion against Stephen.



936 — Baker's Shop in Damascus
Maelfa Pobidd vn Damascus



93 — A P c t r n Dan cus
Ad ar vr Dam scus



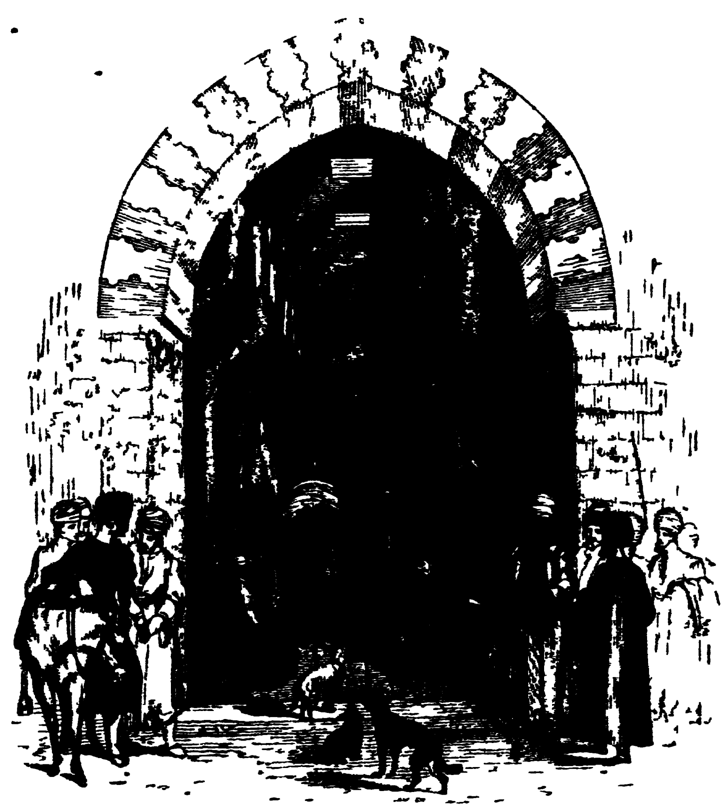
933 — Jac b's Bridge in the Damascus Road
Pont Jacob yn Ffordd Damascus



934 — Damascus



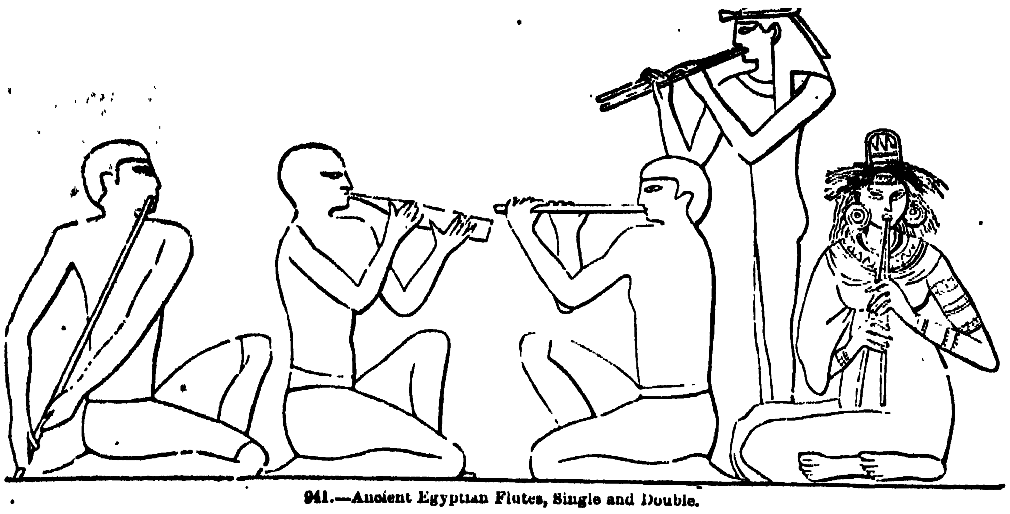
937 — Bazaar in Damascus



9 1 D a



939 — Antioch



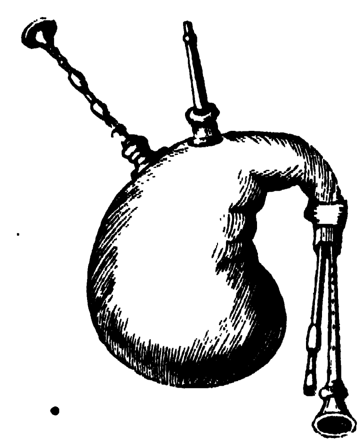
941.—Ancient Egyptian Flutes, Single and Double.
Hen Chwibanoglau Aiphtaidd, Sengl a Dyblyg.



942.—Double Flutes. Greek.
Chwibanoglau Dyblyg. Groeg.



940.—Daniel. (From the Frescoes, by Michael Angelo, in the Sistine Chapel.)
Daniel. (O Ffresglun, gan Michael Angelo, yng Nghapel Sistin.)



945.—Bagpipe. (Dulcimer?)
Codbib.



943.—Double Flutes: Roman.
Chwibanoglau Dyblyg: Rhufeinaidd.



944.—Modern Egyptian Flute. (Nay.)
Chwibanogl Aiphtaidd Ddiweddar.

SUNDAY XXXVIII.—THE PROPHET DANIEL.

THIS prophet was of the tribe of Judah and of the race of David. He, with other young nobles, was transported at an early age to Babylon, by order of Nebuchadnezzar, as an hostage for the good conduct of Jehoiakim, who was then on the throne of Judah; or rather, perhaps, under that policy which sought to aggrandize the imperial court by the presence and services of the noblest and most handsome youths of subject states.

At Babylon, Daniel received the Chaldean name of Belteshazzar, and was placed with other young captives whom Nebuchadnezzar willed to be instructed in the science of the Babylonians. Already well instructed in the best of sciences—that of his holy religion—Daniel resolved to deny himself the use of viands forbidden by the law and prepared by the hands of idolaters. The three companions with whom he was more intimately associated followed his example. And God rewarded their faith; for, notwithstanding the fears of Meltzar, the eunuch to whose charge they had been intrusted, it was found, when they were produced for examination, that not only had they not suffered in appearance by their simple fare, but were more hale and ruddy than the youths who had feasted on the meats and wines of Babylon.

The education of these youths in the sciences of the East lasted three years, at the end of which it was found that Daniel and his three companions surpassed in science and wisdom all the magi of Babylon; and they forthwith commenced their services under a king, who, from all that appears, well knew how to discover and reward merit.

An occasion soon offered for Daniel to distinguish himself, and consequently to attain a high place in the royal service. Having been included in the general proscription of the magi, who were unable to discover and interpret a dream which the king himself had forgotten, but which filled his mind wtih concern, Daniel obtained from the captain of the guard the suspension of the execution of the sentence while he interceded with the king, and from the king himself he obtained further time on engaging to solve the mystery.

Daniel then applied himself to fervent prayer with his companions, and the God whom he so faithfully served heard him in the highest heavens, and imparted to him in a vision the secret on which so many lives depended.

As soon as he had made known his power to afford Nebuchadnezzar the information he desired, he was immediately conducted before the monarch, and proceeded to remind him that he had seen a compound image, and to explain to him how this image represented "the things that should come to pass hereafter." This image had a head of pure gold, which the prophet explained to denote Nebuchadnezzar himself, and his successors in the dynasty which he had aggrandized; the breast and arms of silver denoted the second and inferior empire of the Medes and Persians; the belly and thighs of brass, the next succeeding empire of the Macedonian Greeks; the legs of iron, the empire of the Romans; and the toes, partly iron and part clay, the various states and kingdoms into which that empire should be divided. Lastly, the king had seen a stone which smote the image, and became a great mountain that filled the whole earth, which was so interpreted by the prophet as to show to us that it was intended to apply to the kingdom of the Messiah, which was to be established upon the ruins of these various imperial kingdoms and empires, and to continue for ever. The prophet said to the king in the first place, "Thou art this head of gold;" but, with the necessary reserve of prophecy, he did not indicate the names of the other empires as we have set them down, although they are pointed out by signs not to be mistaken.

The vastness of the view thus presented before the mind of the king, and the deep and magnificent import of his dream, overwhelmed him not less than the mysterious power which had enabled the young prophet to discover and unravel that which had baffled the boasted skill of the Chaldean soothsayers. In the height of his astonishment and admiration the king cast himself at the feet of his captive, and would have worshipped him as more than human, commanding an oblation and sweet odours to be offered to him. But Daniel respectfully directed his attention to the Great God in heaven whom he served, and who had revealed the secret to him; on which the king declared with all sincerity of conviction, "Of a truth your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings."

Nebuchadnezzar was not slow in rewarding one so highly gifted, and so greatly favoured of Heaven. He made him governor over the whole province of Babylon, and bestowed on him the distinguished office of Rab-Mag, or chief of the Magians. The former appears to have been the highest civil employment in the state, as the latter was certainly the highest among the learned offices of the kingdom. At the request of Daniel, the king also promoted his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, to important trusts in the province of Babylon under him.

The king soon after caused to be set up in the plain of Dura, near Babylon, a colossal image of gold, and set forth a decree, that whenever harmonious sounds were heard from "the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer (bagpipe?), or any kind of music," every one should, on pain of death, fall down and worship it. Taking all the circumstances into consideration, it would seem as if the king had become discontented with the particular import of the vision, the vastness of which had at the first so filled his mind; and that it was in order to counteract or defy its application to himself that he now acted. In the visionary image his kingdom was but the head of gold, destined to be superseded and overthrown; but he now sets up an image wholly of gold, as if to express under the same symbol the unity and continuance of his kingdom. It would even seem as if he repented of his acknowledgment of the supremacy of Daniel's God, the God by whom the vision had been sent, seeing that his present orders were so adverse to that admission. The decree as set forth was one with which no pious Jew could comply, and it was soon made known to the king that the three friends of Daniel paid no regard to his command. Daniel himself they were probably afraid to accuse, on account of his high place and his presumed favour at court. The king, in great wrath, summoned the accused to his presence, and deliberately recited to them the terms of his decree and the penalties of disobedience, adding, "Who is that God that should deliver you out of my hands?" They unflinchingly answered that their God was able to do so; and resolutely declared that they would not serve his gods, nor worship the image he had set up. This filled the king with fury, and he commanded that they should be cast into the "burning fiery furnace," heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated. But these holy men remembered Him who had said, "Though thou walkest through the fire, I will be with thee;" and they walked about in the furnace untouched by the devouring flames, and singing the praises of Jehovah. This marvellous sight brought the king to his senses: he called them forth; he acknowledged the exceeding greatness of the God whom they served and by whom they had been preserved; and in the warm enthusiasm of the moment he made a decree that whosoever spoke a word against this Mighty God henceforth, should be cut in pieces, and his house made a dunghill, "because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort." As for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they were not only restored to favour, but promoted to higher offices in the metropolitan province of Babylon.

Some time after these transactions Nebuchadnezzar was warned of the consequences of that excessive pride which formed the chief defect in a character by no means destitute of great and generous qualities. He was "at rest in his house, and flourishing in his palace," when he saw a dream which made him afraid. He beheld a tree which grew till it overspread the earth, and all the fowls of heaven roosted in its branches, and all the beasts of the field reposed beneath its shade. But suddenly "a holy one" came down from heaven and commanded the tree to be hewn down, leaving only the stump in the earth: and by one of those transitions usual in dreams, the language of "the holy one" passed from the condition of the tree to that of the human being it represented:—"Let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth: let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given to him, and let seven times pass over him."

This dream no one could interpret but Daniel. When the king recited it to him, and the perception of its strange and afflicting import came upon him, concern and astonishment held him mute; but when he recovered himself, he proceeded to open its meaning to the king. The tree represented himself and the greatness of the kingdom which God had given to him; and the words of "the holy one" were explained to mean—"That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will."

SUNDAY XXXVIII.—BIBLE HISTORY.

THIS circumstance tended in a great degree to humble Rehoboam, and to make him sensible of his guilt, so as to acknowledge the justice of God in his punishment; but, nevertheless, he again "did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord." He indeed effected many external reformations, and maintained the temple worship during the remainder of his reign; but his heart was not engaged in the service of God, neither was his religion the expression of love to God, but a mere reluctant formal service, extorted and regulated by the influence of fear. When he had somewhat recovered the effects of Shishak's invasion, he made frequent incursions into the land of Israel, and several engagements took place between his troops and those of Jeroboam. In this manner the two rival kings continued to molest and weaken each other all their days. In B.C. 958, Rehoboam died in Jerusalem, after having reigned seventeen years, and was succeeded by his son Abijah. The Scripture emphatically notes that the mother of Rehoboam was Naamah, an Ammonitess; and this is probably done for the sake of intimating that the errors of his reign should be attributed to the influence exercised upon the formation of his character by a woman of this corrupt and idolatrous nation.

Jeroboam, in Israel, was disposed to take advantage of the weakness usual at the commencement of a new reign, by renewing the hostilities against Judah. Abijah was, however, fully equal to the occasion, and took the field to oppose the Israelites, with an army of four hundred thousand men. When he arrived over against Jeroboam's encampment, and was prepared to attack his opponents, he advanced, and having posted himself so as to be heard by his rival and part of his army, he delivered a very animated address, with the view of bringing the contest to an amicable adjustment, or at least to rouse the energies of his own soldiers and to depress those of his adversary. He accordingly reproached them not only as the authors of the revolt, but as guilty of idolatry and impiety, in setting up two golden calves; and he continued—"But as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken him. And behold God himself is with us for our captain; therefore, O ye house of Israel, fight ye not against the Lord, the God of your fathers, for ye shall not prosper." Although the view which Abijah took of the relative position of the two parties was rather one-sided, and such as a king of Judah was likely to take, his pious confidence in God was justified by the result: for, notwithstanding the far superior force of Israel, which doubled his own, and notwithstanding the military skill and experience of Jeroboam, who had placed an ambush behind Judah, so that "When Judah looked back, behold the battle was before and behind; yet when they cried unto the Lord, it came to pass that God smote Jeroboam, and all Israel, before Abijah and Judah. And there fell of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men. Thus the children of Judah prevailed, because they relied on the God of their fathers."

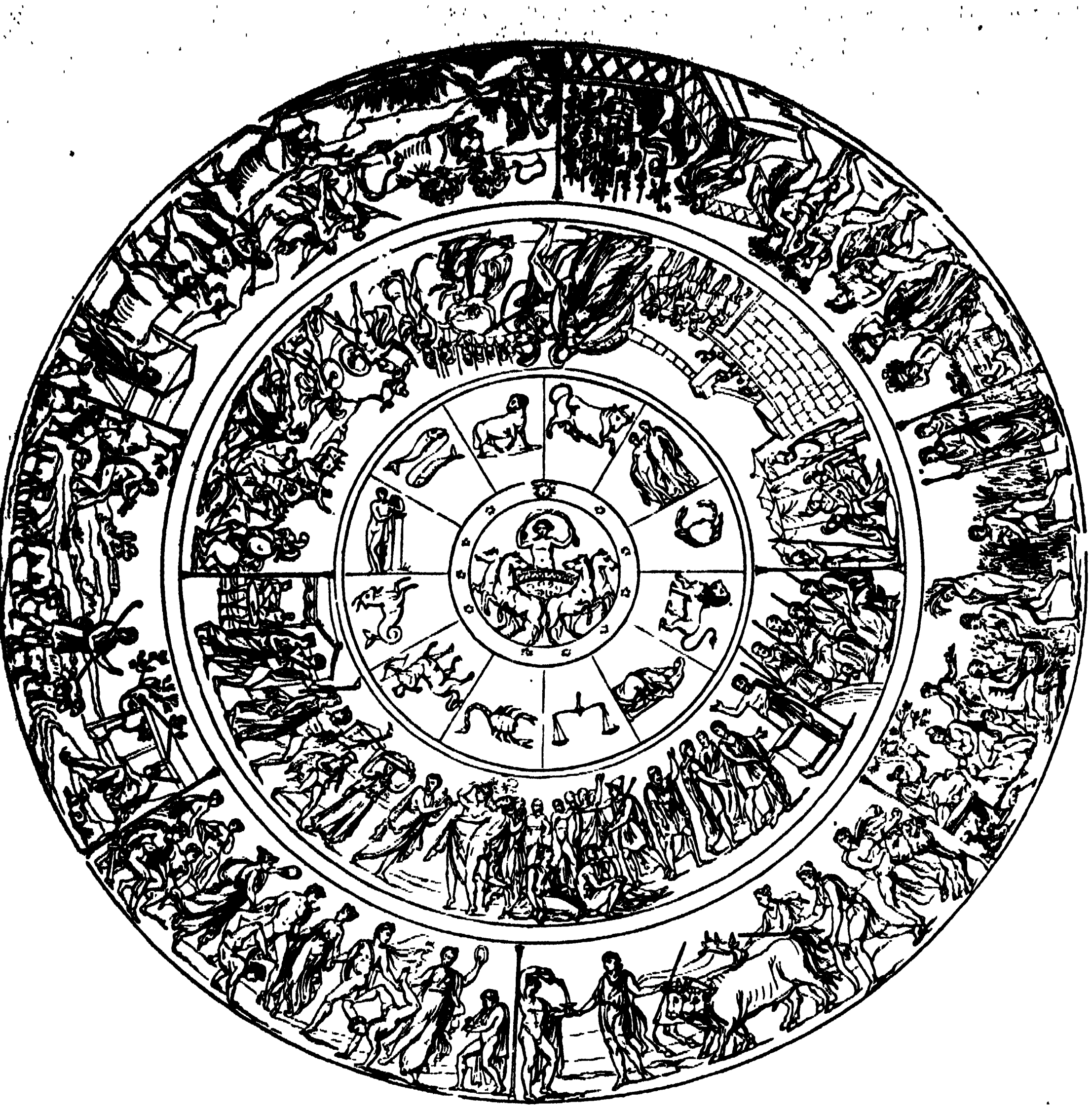
This great victory does not appear to have been followed up by Abijah with any view to the reduction of the Israelites to their abandoned allegiance to the house of David. Some towns were indeed subdued by him, and among the rest Bethel. Yet we do not find that the golden calf in that place was removed; and probably the city was soon again given up to Jeroboam. The latter, however, never recovered his defeat, nor did Abijah long enjoy the fruits of his victory; he died shortly after (B.C. 955), and his death was soon followed (B.C. 954) by that of the king of Israel. Jeroboam was succeeded by his son Nadab, and Abijah by his son Asa.

Asa began his reign by abolishing those idolatries which had been connived at during the preceding reigns, and by using his authority to retain the people in the worship of Jehovah at the temple, and to enforce obedience to his commandments. In consequence of this piety and zeal, Asa was favoured with a state of profound peace and prosperity, and was enabled to employ the greater part of his reign in improving and strengthening his dominions. But at a subsequent period they were invaded by Zerah the Ethiopian, with an immense army, which threatened the utter ruin of his kingdom. But his reliance on God did not forsake him; and, strong in faith, he marched with a very inferior army to oppose the farther advance of the Ethiopians. When he stood prepared for the assault, he offered up a prayer, which breathes the true spirit required from a Hebrew king who knew his real position as a vassal of Jehovah. "Lord, it is nothing to thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power. Help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against the multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee!" The event answered to his faith. The Ethiopians were entirely overthrown and dispersed; and Judah was considerably enriched by the vast spoil taken from the enemy.

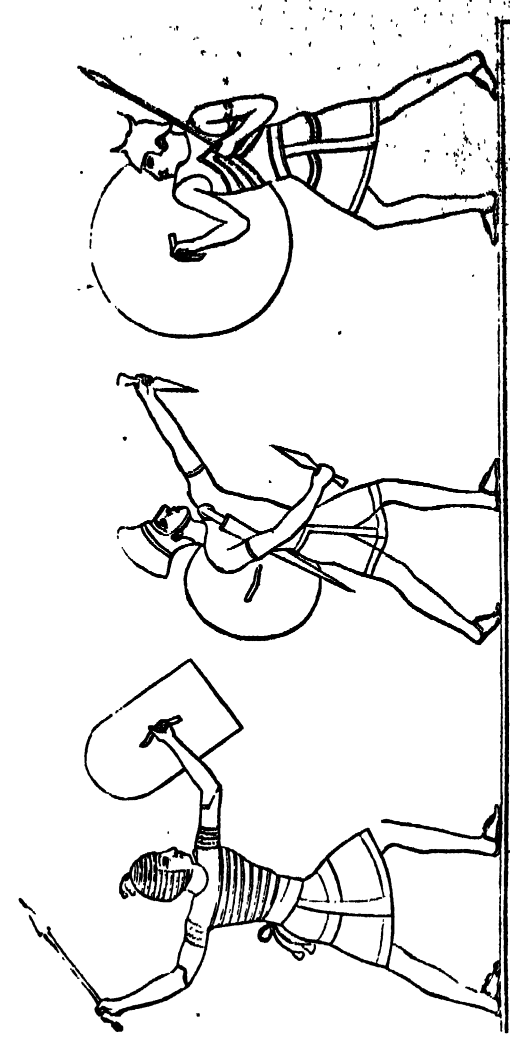
On his return to his capital Asa was exhorted by the prophet Azariah to testify his gratitude by completing the reformation which he had commenced at the beginning of his reign, and he was at the same time assured of the divine assistance and favour. Thus encouraged, the king immediately resumed, with ardour, the work of purging the land of the idolatries and superstitions by which it was still invested. To this end he made a progress through his dominions, and discovered a great many idols and idolatrous symbols in different parts of the land. Not only were these removed; but, having thus been made aware of the corrupt tendencies of his people, the good king deemed it his duty to engage them anew to observe the covenant of their fathers. To this end a grand assembly of the people was convened at Jerusalem, probably at one of the great festivals, and they then and there entered into a solemn engagement to worship and "seek the Lord God of their fathers, with all their heart and with all their soul;" and they also engaged to enforce the observance of the Divine Law, and to denounce all transgressors and idolaters without respect of persons. This covenant was ratified by every one present with a solemn oath; and, as it was very rigidly observed, idolatry was for the time wholly suppressed, and the worship of God generally re-established.

In the kingdom of Israel, Nadab, the son and successor of Jeroboam, was treacherously slain in the second year of his reign (B.C. 953) by Baasha, who held an important command in the army, if he was not its chief commander, and who usurped the government, and accomplished to the uttermost the doom which had been pronounced upon the house of Jeroboam. He did not, however, avoid the impieties which had brought this doom upon that unhappy house; and for this reason the prophet Jehu was sent to predict the ruin of Baasha's family, and that his posterity should share the fate of Jeroboam's descendants.

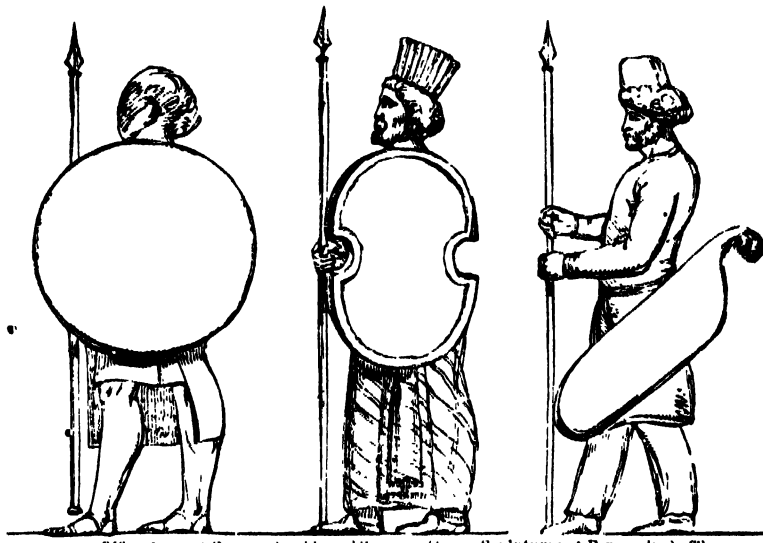
Baasha during his reign made frequent incursions into the land of Judah; and obtained possession of a few frontier towns, one of which, Ramah, he rebuilt and fortified, with the view of commanding and checking the intercourse between the two kingdoms, which he seems to have feared would end in the defection of the ten tribes to the house of David. This measure gave great umbrage to Asa, and must indeed have occasioned much annoyance and embarrassment to him and his subjects. But in this difficulty he unhappily neglected the proper means of defence; and resorted to the most ill-advised and dangerous measure of hiring the king of Syria to make a diversion in his favour by invading the dominions of Israel. Baasha being then obliged to withdraw his forces northward to oppose this new enemy, Asa was relieved from his present trouble, and enabled to recover Ramah; and he availed himself of the materials which Baasha had brought together to fortify that place, to strengthen Geba and Mizpeh. The advantage thus gained was confirmed by the death of Baasha in the ensuing year; but all such advantage was dearly purchased by the treasure of the temple and palace, which he was obliged to squander in order to obtain it; and still more by the displeasure of God, who by his prophet Hanani denounced the proceeding as not only wrong in itself, but as indicating a deplorable lack of confidence in that divine aid through which he had in a former year been enabled to overthrow "the huge host" of the Ethiopians. This message, however, now only exasperated the king, who cast the prophet into prison. Indeed, his temper seems to have become highly irritable, if not sanguinary, in his latter years, which were disfigured by many acts of severity and injustice. A painful disease in the feet, perhaps gout, may in some degree account for this; but here again he incurs the reproach of the sacred historians for his resort to "the physicians, instead of relying upon God;" the cause of which remarkable censure is probably to be found in the fact that these physicians were not Israelites, acting under the blessing of Jehovah, but foreigners and idolaters, who trusted more to idolatrous rites and incantations than to the simple remedies which nature offered. With all the defects of his latter years, for which much allowance may be made, Asa bears a good character in the Scriptural narrative on account of



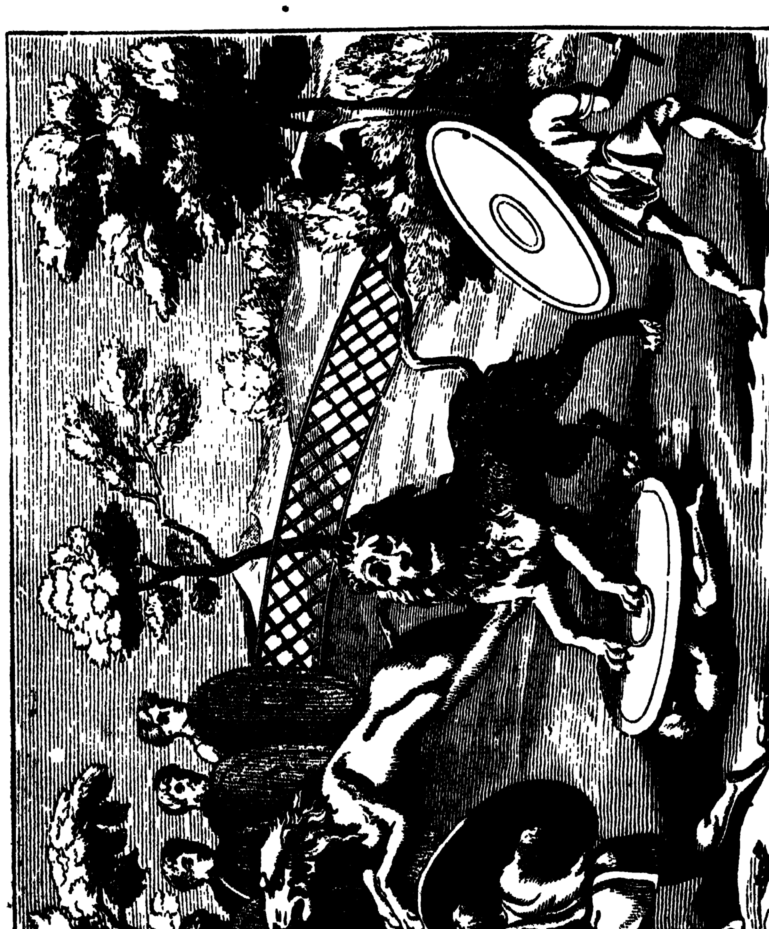
946.—Shield of Achilles. (From a design by M. Quatremere de Quincy.)
Tarian Achel. (O ddychymmyg gan M. Quatremere de Quincy.)



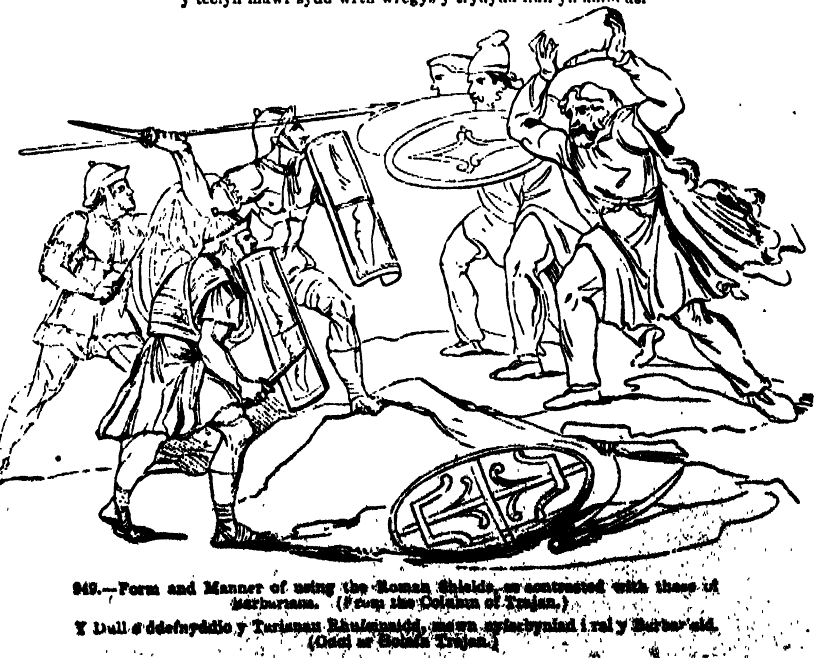
947.—From a Sculpture at Thebes: contrasting the common Shield of the Egyptians with the round Shields of their Adversaries.
O Gerf-lun yn Thebes: yn cyferbynu Tarian gyffredin yr Aiphtiaid â Tharianau eu Gwrthwynebwyr.



948.—Ancient Persian Shields and Spears. (From Sculptures at Persepolis.) The use of the large appendage from the belt of the third figure is doubtful.
Tarianau a Gwaywffyn Persia Hynafol. (O Gerf-lun yn Persepolis.) Mae defnydd y teclyn mawr sydd wrth wregys y trydydd llun yn amheus.



950.—Chase of the Lion. (From 'Antiquities d'Herculaneum.')
Hela Llew.



949.—Form and Manner of using the Roman Shields, as contrasted with those of Barbarians. (From the Column of Trajan.)
Y Dull o ddefnyddio y Tarianau Rhufeinaidd, mewn cyferbyniad i rai y Barbariaid. (Oddi ar Golofn Trajan.)



953.—Head and Foot of Raven.
Pen a Throed Cigfran.



951.—The River Jordan. (Forbin.)
Afon yr Iorddonen.



955.—Melkart, or the Tyrian Hercules. (the Phœnician Baal.)
Melkart, neu'r Erewlff [illegible]. (y Baal [illegible].)



957.—Astarte in a Car, as represented at Sidon.
Astarte mewn Cerbyd, fel y'i darlunid yn Sidon.



958.—Astarte: one of her forms at Tyre.
Astarte: un o'i ffurfiau yn Tyrus.



959.—Head of Astarte.
Pen Astarte.



956.—Head of Melkart.
Pen Melkart.



952.—[illegible] under a Tree.
[illegible]



951.—Elijah in the Desert. (M. Angelo.)
Elias yn y Diffeithwch.

the general rectitude of his conduct and his zealous services in upholding the great principles of the theocracy. He died in 929 B. C. after a long and, upon the whole, prosperous reign of forty-one years. He was sincerely and deeply lamented by all his subjects, who evinced their approbation of his reign by honouring his remains with a magnificent funeral in the sepulchre which he had prepared for himself upon Mount Zion.

Baasha, king of Israel, who, after a reign of twenty-four years, died in the twenty-sixth year of Asa (930 B.C.), was succeeded by his son Elah, who was slain, in the second year of his reign, by Zimri, one of the generals of his army, who then usurped the government of Israel. Immediately on his accession to the throne, the dictates of that barbarous policy which has generally prevailed in the East, led him to become the instrument of the divine wrath, which, through the prophet Jehu, had been denounced upon the house of Baasha. He slew all the descendants of that prince, and left their bodies unburied, and ignominiously exposed to the dogs and to birds of prey.

The army was in the field acting against the Philistines when these events took place at Tirzah, which was then the capital of the kingdom; and the news no sooner arrived, than the troops declared in favour of their own commander Omri, and proclaimed him king. The new monarch had the advantage of promoting his own interest by appearing as the avenger of the murdered sovereign. He immediately marched against Zimri in his capital, and shut him up in it. But the miserable usurper made no struggle to maintain himself in the position he had assumed. He fled to his harem, which he set on fire, and perished in the flames. The field was, however, not yet clear for Omri; for while the army had elected him to the throne, a strong party, equally disgusted at the deed of Zimri, had at the same time offered the throne to Tibni, who was not disposed to abandon his at least equal claims in favour of the nominee of the military. There was a civil war of six years between them; but eventually Omri prevailed, and Tibni was put to death. Omri, being thus left undisputed master of the kingdom, built Samaria, which from that time became the capital of the kingdom, and gave its name not only to the surrounding country, but eventually to the whole kingdom of the ten tribes. After a reign of eleven years, five of which were after the death of Tibni, Omri died, in 918 B.C. and was succeeded by his son Ahab. This prince, whose reign occupies so large a space in the Hebrew annals, began to reign in the thirty-eighth year of Asa, king of Judah. Throughout his reign of twenty-one years, Ahab was entirely under the influence of his idolatrous and unprincipled wife Jezebel, a daughter of Eth-baal, king of Tyre. Hitherto the irregularities connected with the worship of the golden calves, as improper symbols of Jehovah, had formed the chief offence of Israel. But Ahab and Jezebel united their authority to introduce the gods of other nations. The king built a temple in Samaria, set up an image, and consecrated a grove to Baal, the god of the Sidonians; and Jezebel, earnest in promoting the honour and worship of her native god, maintained a multitude of priests and prophets of Baal. Thus in a few years the grossest forms of idolatry became predominant throughout the land, and Jehovah, and the golden calves as symbols of him, were viewed with no more reverence, if with so much, as Baal and his image.

It now seemed as if the knowledge of the true God would be for ever lost among the Israelites. But suddenly the prophet Elijah boldly stood up among them, to stem the overwhelming tide of corruption, and succeeded in pres- ving many of his countrymen in the worship of Jehovah. The record of the reign of Ahab is chiefly occupied with an account of the struggle which this great prophet waged against principalities and powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places, in honour of Jehovah.

He is introduced with considerable abruptness, by the name of Elijah the Tishbite—from the name of a town beyond the Jordan to which he belonged—as announcing punishment in the shape of a long-continued drought, and consequently famine, which should be removed only at his own intercession. This great calamity commenced about the sixth year of Ahab's reign; and it then became needful that the prophet should withdraw from the presence and solicitations of the king. Accordingly he concealed himself in a cave near the brook Cherith—one of the streams which fall into the Jordan—where the kind providence of God put it into the hearts of some Arabs who were encamped in the neighbourhood, to send him bread and meat every morning and evening. The word which means "Arabs" denotes also "ravens," whence in the English version, and in some others, the prophet is represented as being fed by ravens. There is no question that the Almighty could have caused even ravens to feed his servant, morning and evening, with bread and flesh; but it is better to take the explanation which offers the fewest difficulties, and which is most in agreement with probabilities and circumstances.

When the brook Cherith was dried up, the prophet was instructed to cross the country into the dominion of Jezebel's father. He accordingly went to Sarepta, near Sidon, and, as he came near that place, met a poor woman who had come out to seek a few sticks for fuel; the prophet asked her for a little water: and notwithstanding the distress and the scarcity of water which prevailed, she readily complied with the request of the travel-worn stranger. But when he also begged of her some bread, she declared to him that she had nothing left in the world but a handful of meal and a little oil, with which she was then about to prepare her last meal; and when that was done, nothing remained for her and her young son but to die. Elijah, however, encouraged her not to fear, but to prepare him some food, promising in that Great Name which even foreigners had learned to dread, that her scanty supply should not fail until the bountiful heavens once more gave forth relief. Her faith was such as enabled her to comply with this request; and the consequence was, that for above two years she, and her son, and the prophet, were supplied miraculously with sufficient food; for "the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sent rain upon the earth."

The implicit faith of this poor widow in the power and mercy of the God of her foreign guest, was strengthened, and at the same time rewarded, by a more signal miracle which Elijah effected during his abode with her. Her son, who had died of some grievous disorder, was restored to life by the intercession and prayers of the prophet, and she now confessed her full conviction that Elijah was "a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in his mouth was truth."

In the third year of his absence, Elijah received the divine command to go and present himself before Ahab. At this time the famine was so severe, that the king in person had gone through one part of his dominions in search of provisions, while he sent Obadiah, his principal steward, into another part for a similar purpose. Obadiah was a good man; he had used his high influence in protecting the persecuted servants of Jehovah. Elijah met this person, and prevailed upon him to conduct him to the king. Ahab had long been seeking him in vain, with the view of punishing him as the author of the calamities which Israel suffered, or of extorting from him the intercession through which they were destined to cease; and he no sooner saw him, than he broke forth into reproaches against him as the troubler of Israel. But the prophet boldly retorted the charge, and affirmed that all the complicated miseries under which the nation suffered had befallen it on account of his rejection of the God of Israel, and of the idolatries with which he and his queen had polluted the land.

Then, in order to satisfy Ahab and the whole nation of the vanity and impotency of the god to whom they had turned, and of the priests and prophets by whom these gods were served, he offered singly to confront the whole of them in the sight of Jehovah, that it might be seen by manifest signs who was the true God and worthy of worship. Awed by the rebuke and the decisive manner of the prophet, and perhaps apprehensive of some further judgment if he refused, the king ordered the attendance of all the priests of Baal, in number about eight hundred, near Mount Carmel, the spot chosen by Elijah, to bring the matter at issue to a final and fair decision. The people assembled in great numbers to witness this momentous contest, in which they were so deeply interested. The prophet then proposed that two bullocks should be prepared for sacrifice, the one by the priests of Baal, which they should cut in pieces and lay upon the wood, but put no fire underneath; and the other by himself, in precisely the same manner. And then continued Elijah, "Call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of Jehovah; and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God." Nothing could be more fair and open than this; but it is very awful to think that the supremacy of Jehovah should ever have become a question—for it was the question—among so large a proportion of the chosen nation which he had redeemed from the house of bondage, and made his own by a special covenant.

When every preparation had been completed according to the directions of Elijah, the priests of Baal called upon their idol to hear them, and to attest his power by consuming with fire from heaven the victim laid upon the altar. But Baal heard them not: "there was no voice nor any that answered." In vain were all their efforts, although they continued to call upon their god until the time of offering the evening sacrifice. No answering fire appeared; and as the day advanced, the priests, in the frenzy of a losing cause, "cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner, with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them."

SUNDAY XXXVIII.—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

AS Saul was a native of Tarsus, in Asia Minor, where many Jews were settled, he enjoyed, by his birth there, of free parents, the privileges of a Roman citizen. His education in his native city was necessarily less exclusive—more Greek—than that which prevailed among the Jews in Palestine. But as the exclusive Jewish learning, in the law, was supposed to be best taught in Jerusalem, it was usual to send young Jews, born in foreign lands, thither, to complete their education. Saul was accordingly sent to the holy city, where he studied the law with great diligence and much distinction under its most eminent living teacher, Gamaliel. This fiery youth threw all the ardour of his soul into the movement against the innovating disciples of Jesus, which was commenced by the death of Stephen; for the popular rage was too thoroughly excited to be satiated with the blood of that holy man, but sought new objects for its fury. A great part of the converts fled before the storm into other parts of the country, and many returned to their houses in Asia Minor, Cyprus, and other places, where they made known the Gospel they had received.

Philip, one of the seven deacons, left Jerusalem about this time to preach the Gospel in Samaria. He was heard with great attention; and the miracles of benevolence which he performed, in casting forth evil spirits and in healing the diseased, were witnessed with joy and conviction by the right-minded. Among those who were converted and baptized was a man named Simon, who had acquired much influence over the people by his skill in the magic arts, and by impressing upon them that he was in truth some great and mysterious personage. This man, when Peter and John had been brought down to Samaria by the tidings of Philip's success, saw the new converts receive the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost at the prayer of the apostles and the imposition of their hands. Still really unconverted, and perhaps regarding the holy apostles as only greater masters of the art in which he was an adept, Simon had the temerity to offer them money if they would impart to him the power which they possessed of conferring the gifts of the Holy Ghost by the imposition of their hands. This brought down upon him a severe rebuke from Peter, who plainly told him that "his heart was not right with God."

After the apostles had by their labours confirmed and extended the work of God in Samaria, they returned to Jerusalem; but Philip was directed by a divine impulse to proceed southward into the country lying towards Gaza on the road to Jerusalem. In this quarter, which was the usual route from Jerusalem to Egypt, Philip encountered a great man of Ethiopia, who was returning home in his chariot from Jerusalem, where he had been to attend the Passover. Whether this personage was a Hebrew, who had been raised to high office in Ethiopia—like Joseph in Egypt, Daniel in Babylon, and Mordecai in Persia; or that he was a native of Ethiopia, in which country it has been alleged that Judaism had made considerable progress—cannot with any certainty be determined. He was however treasurer to Candace, queen of the Ethiopians; and Philip perceived that, as he rode, he was reading in a book; and as the Orientals always read aloud, he found that his attention was engaged by the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. Philip then saw the purpose for which he had been sent into this remote quarter, and he accosted the reader with "Understandest thou what thou readest?" The eunuch candidly replied, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" And then he desired Philip to come and sit with him in the chariot, for his question implied that he could give the instruction desired. What perplexed the eunuch was to know whether the very striking words of the passage of Scripture which engaged his attention (Isa. liii. 7, 8) applied to the prophet himself or to some other person. It was easy for Philip to show that they applied to Jesus, the mysteries of whose Gospel he fully opened to the astonished Ethiopian, who received them with the most sincere conviction. Being thus instructed, he asked, on coming to some water, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip answered, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest;" and on his replying "I believe that Jesus is the Son of God," he consented to baptize him. The chariot was then stopped, and they went down together into the water, where the Ethiopian was baptized in the name of Christ. Philip then left him, and the eunuch "went on his way rejoicing," even as one who had found a pearl of great price.

Meanwhile the zeal of Saul against the followers of Jesus had not escaped the notice and approval of the Sanhedrim, from which he was intrusted with a commission to proceed to Damascus, where the Jews were settled in great numbers, and, with the co-operation of the synagogues in that place, to apprehend and bring to Jerusalem those who had become followers of Christ. He proceeded on his way with a suitable escort, full of the conviction that he was doing God service, and his heart overflowing with bitterness and wrath against the believers in a crucified Messiah. He had already nearly reached Damascus, when he was suddenly blinded and struck to the ground by the excess of light which fell upon him, while a voice was heard from heaven, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" He then naturally asked, "Who art thou, Lord?" and was answered, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." On hearing this, all the proud confidence of this man broke suddenly from him; his fierceness passed away, and he became gentle and submissive. Trembling and astonished, his only question was, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and he was told to proceed to Damascus, and wait further directions in that city.

The attendants had seen the light, and had heard the sound of a voice without distinguishing the words. Saul had not only seen that light, but had seen in it the glory of Jesus, who had been the object of his contempt and hate. He had instinctively closed his eyes when that effulgence beamed upon him. Now he opened them, but saw not: he was blind; and his attendants had to lead him by the hand to Damascus. There he remained three days without sight, and during those days he partook not of meat or drink—his absorbing thoughts and new convictions being food enough for him.

At the end of that time, a disciple of Damascus, named Ananias, was instructed in a vision to go to him. Having heard of his character and his mission to Damascus, Ananias was astonished at this charge: but the Lord said unto him, "Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear thy name before the gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Thus encouraged, Ananias went to the house where Saul lodged, and putting his hands upon him, he said, in terms which recognized him as a fellow Christian, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost." On this his sight was on the instant restored to him, and immediately after he joined himself by baptism to the Church of Christ.

Thus marvellously was the most determined enemy of the truth in Jesus struck down "in his pride of place," and humbled to the very feet of Him whose servants he had so relentlessly pursued: and thus were all his high talents and the indomitable energies of his character, forcibly and against all probable circumstances, enlisted into the service of that great cause which he had so zealously laboured to destroy.

After having continued for some time in daily intercourse with the disciples at Damascus, Saul began to declare in the synagogues that Jesus was the Son of God. This excited a profound sensation among the Jews of that city, who were well acquainted with the nature of the business which he came to transact with those very synagogues in which he now preached the name of Jesus. But he daily wielded with increasing power the weapons which God had placed in his hands, proving by irrefragable arguments that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the Messiah promised to the fathers.

After this Saul withdrew for a time into Arabia, we know not for what purpose, and then returned to Damascus, where he for a long while pursued his evangelical labours with success, till the Jews became so highly exasperated against him that they watched the gates of the city day and night to slay him in his going forth. Being apprised of this, the disciples let him down in a basket over the wall, and he proceeded to Jerusalem, which he entered a very different man from the Saul who had set forth, three years before, on his persecuting mission to Damascus.

The disciples at Jerusalem, better informed of his original character than of his conversion and subsequent proceedings, were at first afraid to admit him into their societies. But Barnabas, who had probably been intimate with him in former times, was convinced of his sincerity, and introduced him to the apostles, describing to them the remarkable circumstances of his conversion, and how boldly he had preached Jesus in the synagogues of Damascus.



961.—Peter visiting Dorcas.
Petr yn ymweled â Dorcas.



960.—Descent of the Holy Ghost.
Disgyniad yr Ysbryd Glân.



962.—Roman Consul.
Consul Rhufeinig.



963.—Roman Soldiers.
Milwyr Rhufeinig.



964.—Roman Soldiers.
Milwyr Rhufeinig.



[illegible].—Roman Eagle.
[illegible]



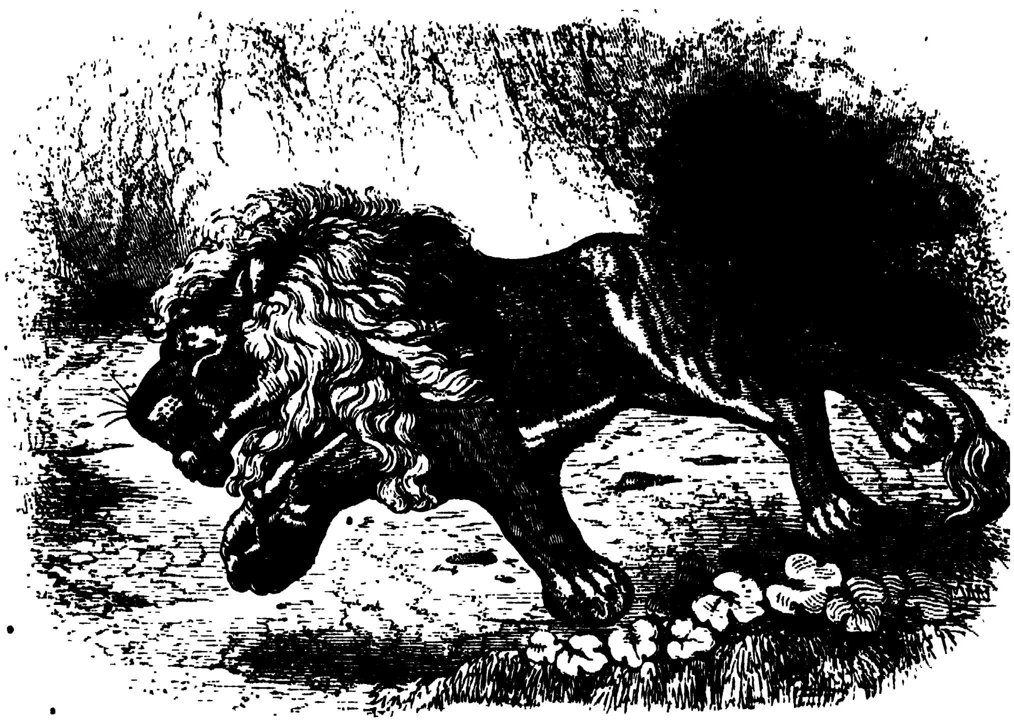
[illegible]



968.—Treasure-finding.
Canfod Trysor.



967.—Job and his Friends.
Job a'i Gyfeillion.



970.—Dying Lion.
Llew yn Marw.



969.—Arabs sitting amidst the Ruins of Palmyra.
Arabiaid yn eistedd yng nghanol Adfeilion Palmyra.



971.—Lioness and Whelps.
Llewes a'i Chenawon.

SUNDAY XXXIX.—JOB.

IN proceeding cursorily through the book of Job, it will be our object to trace the lines of argument and disputation taken by Job and his friends, and to point out some of the illustrations of ancient manners and usages, especially as illustrated by modern Oriental customs, which are contained in their different utterances.

Job's commencing speech (chap. iii.) seems at the first view little more than a mass of incoherent though eloquent complaints, and this is in a great degree the fact, and is conformable to the position in which he appears. But examined more closely, it will be seen that his complaints proceed on the notion that he had not been dealt with justly, and that God acts arbitrarily and even harshly in inflicting calamities on men.

Much of the chapter is taken up with allusions to the peace and immunity from pain, of which he should *then* have been in the enjoyment, had he died in early life, before these troubles came upon him:—

> "Then should I be at rest
> With kings and counsellors of the earth,
> Who built up for themselves—ruins."

This is beautifully expressed. It seems as if he had meant to say, "who built up magnificent palaces and monuments," but that the idea was arrested or *turned* in his mind by the sudden recollection that many of these fabrics, destined for immortality, had already become desolate and ruined. If this was the case in the early times to which Job belonged, how much more now, that the ages have grown old, and when a thousand monuments of human greatness—cities, palaces, and temples, have crumbled to ruins, or have utterly perished, leaving no track behind.

In another place Job classes himself with those—

> "Who long for death and it cometh not,
> And dig for it more than for hid treasures;
> Who rejoice exceedingly,
> Who exult, when they can find the grave."

This allusion to the digging for hid treasure is very interesting, considering the early date usually assigned to the book of Job. It shows that the same causes produced in remotest times the same effects which are at this day constantly witnessed in the East. The insecurity of life and property, wars, revolutions, sudden journeys, and the want of safe places of deposit, have in the course of ages caused vast amounts of property to be buried underground, to be built up in walls, and otherwise secured. The people know this, and their minds are occupied with the idea that some fortunate chance, some slight indication, may one day render them the possessors of some of these hoards. Every man is constantly on the watch for any little circumstance which may indicate to him one of these hiding-places. European travellers are seldom supposed to have any other object than to discover such treasures; and as they are believed to possess superior means of detecting the secret hoards, all their motions are eagerly watched, from their supposed reference to that object. Treasure-seeking is the lottery of the East; and the extent to which it fills the Eastern mind may partly be estimated from the prominence which the finding of hid treasure occupies in a large proportion of the Eastern tales. We have among ourselves a few current stories bearing on the subject, which used formerly to be related to young people with earnestness, as matters of great interest, but which have passed out of use since the security of property, the cessation of civil wars, the discontinuance of lotteries, and the increased sources of employment, have diverted attention from the barren contingencies of gain from the possible accidents of life. To the illustrations of this curious subject, which we have before had occasion to introduce, we may here add the remark of Mr. Roberts, in his book of 'Oriental Illustrations:'—"We are constantly hearing of treasures which have been or are about to be discovered. Sometimes you may see a large space of ground which has been completely turned up, or an old foundation or ruin entirely demolished in hopes of finding the hidden gold. A man has found a small coin, or heard a tradition, or has had a dream, and off he goes to his toil. Perhaps he has been *seen* on the spot, or he has consulted a soothsayer; the report gets out, and then come the needy, the old, and the young, a motley group, all full of anxiety to join in the spoil. Some have iron instruments, others have sticks, and some their fingers to scratch up the ground. At last some of them begin to look at each other with considerable suspicion, as if all were not right, and each seems to wish that he had not come on so foolish an errand, and then to steal off as quietly as they can."

Before leaving Job's complaint, we desire to direct attention to a very beautiful image in iii. 9. In cursing the day of his birth, he says:—

> "Let it long for light and have none;
> Neither let it see *the eyelashes of the morning.*"

This is the literal translation of the words somewhat frigidly rendered "dawning of the day" in the authorized version. So in Milton's 'Lycidas:'—

> "Ere the high lawns appeared
> Under *the opening eyelids of the morn,*
> We drove afield."

All this is founded on the image which, among the poets, makes the sun "the eye of day;" whence his earliest beams, before he has risen, are the eyelids or eyelashes of the morning.

The intemperate language of Job rouses his friends, and constrains one of them, Eliphaz, to give vent to the suspicions of his rectitude, which they had hitherto concealed. After reproving Job for his impatience, and exhorting him to put in practice those lessons which he had so often recommended to others, Eliphaz proceeds to advance the general doctrine advocated by all the three friends throughout the poem—that misery implies guilt; and he insinuates that the wickedness of Job must be the cause of his present afflictions. He cites a vision with which he had been favoured, which he regards as confirmatory of the view he has taken; and then he urges the sufferer to humble himself before God, acknowledging his afflictions to be the merited punishment of his transgressions, as the most likely means of regaining the prosperity he had lost.

This argument of Eliphaz occupies the fourth and fifth chapters of the book.

Eliphaz seems to speak first, as the oldest of the three friends, and he is the most sedate and moderate of the three. There is an air of dignity and self-restraint which distinguishes this speaker from those who come after him; but in his references to Job's loss of his substance, and the melancholy death of his children, there are severities approaching to the unfeeling, the force and injustice of which the patriarch felt very deeply, and complains of them in his reply. It may also be noticed that whenever Eliphaz speaks, he loses, as he proceeds with his orations, much of the moderation which marks his commencements.

The following points may be selected from the first oration of Eliphaz:—

He is strong in his references to lions, and by the comparisons in the following passage he means to intimate that the violent and unjust, represented by ferocious beasts of prey, reap their own in kind, and are destroyed in the very act and prospect of the enjoyment they had prepared to themselves:—

> "The roaring of the lion and the voice of the fierce
> lion (are silenced),
> And the teeth of the young lions are broken out.
> The fierce lion perisheth for lack of prey,
> And the whelps of the lioness are scattered abroad."

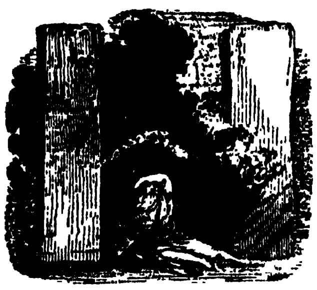
The form of the first verse of the fifth chapter, "Call now, if He will answer thee," gives a recent American translator of the book, Mr. Noyes, occasion to remark upon the frequency with which the name of the Most High is omitted in the book of Job, and the pronoun substituted. "This," he remarks, "corresponds to a custom in Scotland, where they say '*His* will be done,' without an antecedent to the pronoun." So in Scott's 'Black Dwarf,' near the end of chapter seven:—

"'O my child, before you run in danger, let me hear you say "His will be done!"'

"'Urge me not, mother, not now.' He was rushing out, when looking back, he observed his grandmother make a mute attitude of affliction: he returned hastily, threw himself into her arms, and said, 'Yes, mother, I *can* say "His will be done," since it will comfort you.'

"'May He go forth—may He go forth with you, my dear bairn; and O, may He give you cause to say on your return, "His name be praised!"'"

SUNDAY XXXIX.—BIBLE HISTORY.



OW long halt ye between two opinions? If Jehovah be the God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him:"—were the words in which Elijah had already proposed to the assembled multitude the great matter which was at issue. And now, when the priests of Baal had been suffered to consume most of the day in their useless invocations, he advanced to prepare the altar for his offering. He reared it with twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes; and having laid on the wood and the victim, caused the whole to be inundated with water from the river. He then advanced, and called upon the Lord to interpose on this great occasion, that all Israel might know that he was the true God, the God of their fathers and of their nations; and that their hearts might be turned back from vain idols to himself. Accordingly, at that word, the fire of heaven came down, and in one instant consumed the victim, and dried up, by its intense heat, all the water which had been poured out around. When the people beheld that sight, contrasted as it was with the abortive efforts of Baal's priests, they yielded to the mighty impulse of the conviction which oppressed them, and fell upon their faces, exclaiming, "Jehovah, he is the God! Jehovah, he is the God."

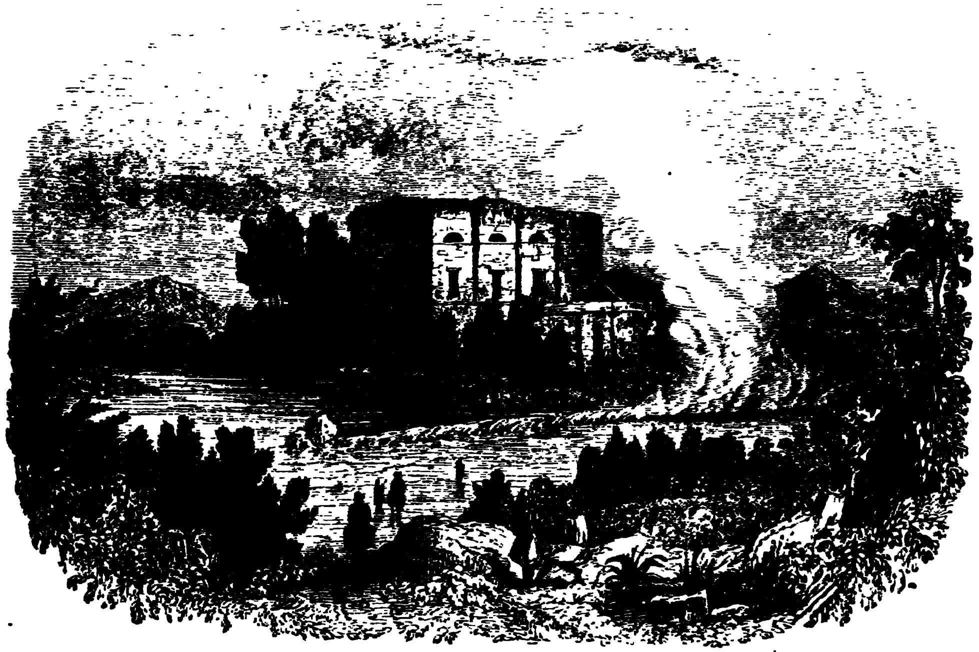
The prophet availed himself of the disposition thus created in the people, by commanding the priests of Baal to be slain; and his order was immediately carried into effect. The idolatry of Israel having thus received a considerable check, and its chief abettors having been brought to condign punishment, the prophet intimated to Ahab the approach of relief from the awful calamity under which the land had groaned so long, and directed him to return to his home in that confidence. The prophet himself then proceeded to the top of Mount Carmel, and prayed fervently for rain seven times; the promise of which, speedily followed by fulfilment, soon appeared in the shape of "a little cloud like a man's hand" rising out of the Mediterranean—a phenomenon which in warm climates is not an unusual harbinger of rain. The prophet then "girded up his loins," for speed, and ran till he overtook the chariot of the king, and ran before it to the gate of Jezreel; for meanwhile "the heavens had grown black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain."

These stupendous incidents had probably produced some salutary impressions upon the feeble mind of Ahab; but they soon disappeared before the higher energies of his wife's character, and her commanding influence upon him. Jezebel was enraged to the uttermost by the destruction of her priests, and vowed to be revenged upon the author of the massacre. Elijah heard of this, and giving her full credit for the will and power to execute her threat, he deemed it right to withdraw himself for the present beyond her reach. He therefore resolved to retire for a while into the wilderness, where Israel had first received from God the law which he had laboured to uphold. When he had travelled about one hundred miles south of Jezreel, the travel-worn prophet, exhausted with thirst and hunger, found the strength of mind and body which had hitherto upheld him give way. He cast himself under the shade of a juniper-tree, and prayed for death to end his troubles. "It is enough," he cried; "Now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers." But God had not forgotten his servant. An angel was sent to comfort and sustain him, and by encouraging promises urged him to pursue his journey to Horeb, "the Mount of God." With renewed confidence and strength he travelled on through the valleys and among the mountains so renowned in the early history of Israel, till he reached the solitudes of the uppermost Sinai, where, as is usually supposed, he stationed himself in the cave where Moses was when he beheld the glory of Jehovah from "the cleft of the rock." In this spot the Lord appeared to him, preceded by a strong wind, an earthquake, and a fire, and speaking to him in a still small voice, commanded him to repair to Damascus, and anoint Hazael to be king over Syria, after which he should anoint Jehu to be king over Israel, and appoint Elisha to be his own successor. The prophet then delayed not to return, but of his commissions the last was the only one which he deemed it necessary to execute in person. Elisha, the son of Shaphat, of Manasseh beyond Jordan, he found ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen, and cast his prophet's mantle (probably of hair) over him as he passed. Elisha understood the sign, and after he had bidden farewell to his parents, followed the prophet, to whom he thenceforth remained constantly attached.

About this period Benhadad, the king of Damascene Syria, invaded the land of Israel with a very powerful army; and meeting with little resistance, quickly advanced against Samaria, and closely blockaded the city. The return of seasonable rains could not at once restore plenty to the land, or restore the population, which the famine had decimated. Hence the enfeebled Israelites were so much dismayed by the advance of the Syrians, that, instead of attempting resistance, those who abode not in fortified towns fled for refuge to the caverns and fortresses of the wilderness. This state of affairs raised the boldness of the invaders to insolence, and very insulting was the language in which Benhadad challenged Ahab to surrender his capital. Aware of his defenceless condition, Ahab felt obliged to curb his indignation, and consented to become tributary to the Syrian king. This readiness of submission induced Benhadad to rise in his demands, and by a second message he required the immediate and unconditional surrender of all that belonged to him and to his subjects. The spiritless Ahab was disposed to purchase peace, even on terms so ignominious, but here the elders of Israel interposed, and would not allow him to consent. On this, a third message from the Syrian monarch threatened the immediate destruction of Samaria and the massacre of all its inhabitants. At this point, the Lord, whose protection he had forfeited, and, indeed, wilfully abandoned, interposed to show to the king and to the house of Israel that he was able to deliver those who found no help from the idols they had served and worshipped. By the command of a prophet, and under the assurance of victory which that prophet conveyed, the king ventured to make a sally against the vast host of the Syrians, at the head of a small band composed of the servants and retainers of the nobles then in Damascus. Benhadad, disturbed at his wine by the intelligence, commanded that the poor wretches should be taken alive; and they were thus allowed to advance to the very precincts of the camp. They there opposed and slew all those who advanced to seize them, and their determined aspect so dismayed the Syrians, through the secret operation of God upon their minds, that they were seized with a panic, and fled in all directions. This they did so precipitately, that the king himself had scarcely time to save himself by flight.

It does not appear that Ahab made any suitable return for this deliverance, or was induced by it to turn from his evil courses and obstinate unbelief. He seems also too hastily to have concluded his victory final, and, therefore, neglected a prophetic intimation that the Syrians would next year resume the warfare with recruited strength. Return, however, they did, with a more powerful force, and encamped near Aphek. Here Ahab, at the head of a very unequal force, marched against them, having been encouraged by a prophet to believe that the Lord had devoted Benhadad to destruction, and would not fail to deliver him into his hands, that he might execute judgment upon him. Accordingly the Syrians were again overthrown, and those who escaped the sword of Israel were crushed by the falling of the wall of Aphek, under which the battle took place. Benhadad, with a few attendants, escaped the general slaughter, and succeeded in gaining entrance into a house in Aphek, where they concealed themselves, though closely pursued by some of Ahab's followers. The arrogant Syrian now saw that he had no resource but in submission to the man he had so grievously insulted. Some of his attendants were accordingly sent clothed in sackcloth, and with ropes around their necks—to implore quarter from the king of Israel. This submission and humiliation to him so flattered the vanity of Ahab, that, unmindful of his own safety and the interests of his kingdom, he granted unconditionally all that was asked. He sent for Benhadad, and not only treated him with marked respect, but contracted a very disadvantageous peace with him, and then allowed him to depart. In consequence of this violation of the command by which Benhadad had been devoted to destruction, a prophet, wounded, and disguised in sackcloth and ashes, placed himself in the way of Ahab, and passed upon him the sentence of God, warning him that his life should be lost in fighting against the man he had delivered, and that his subjects should become the victims of his sword. On hearing this, the king of Israel went to his house "heavy and displeased."

Not long after this the king was disposed to enlarge his garden in Jezreel, by taking into it the patrimonial vineyard of a person named Naboth. The owner, however, declined to part with it; on which the king, in a very childish spirit, took to his bed, refused his food, and lay with his face to the wall. On learning this, his wife Jezebel came to him, and hearing his complaint, was delighted at the opportunity it offered of confirming him in his disposition to rely on herself. She urged him to rise and enjoy himself without further



973.—Scene on the supposed Brook Cherith (H eromax).
Golygfa ar y dybiedig Afon Cerith.



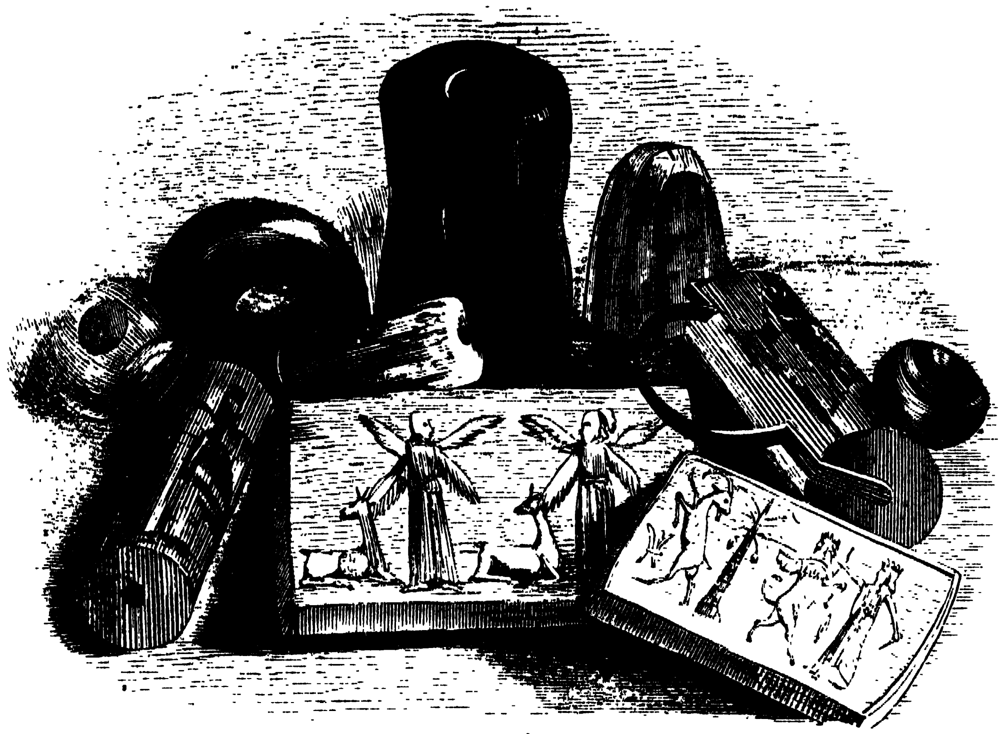
972.—Mountains of El Tyh (or Wandering), with the Rock of the Pilgrims.
Mynyddoedd El Tyh (neu Crwydriad), gyda Chraig y Pererinion.



974.—Wady Mokatteb, in the Lower Sinai.
Wady Mokatteb, yn y Sinai Isaf.



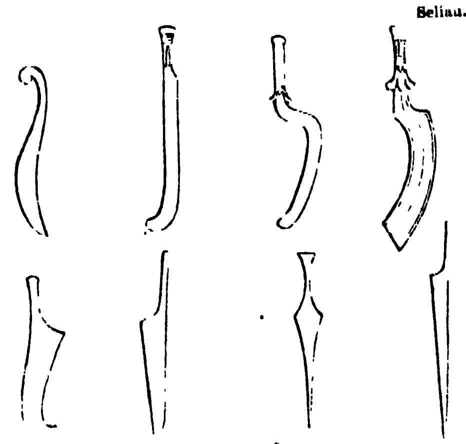
975.—Mount Serbal: Sinai.
Mynydd Serbal.



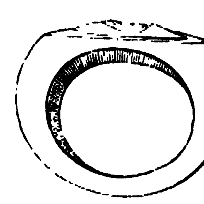
976.—Seals.
Seliau.



978.—Juniper Tree.
Merywen.



977.—Knives and Lancets of Egypt. (Collected from various Sculptures.)
Cyllyll ac Ellynod yr Aipht. (Wedi eu casglu o amryw Gerf-luniau.)



976*.—Signet-Ring.
Sel-fodrwyau.



979.—Ropes on Neck.
Rhaffau am Wddf.



981.—Elijah and Elisha. (Domenichino.)
Elias ac Eliseus.



980.—Girded Loins.
Lwynau Gwregysedig.

care; for that she would obtain for him the vineyard of Naboth. And she did so. On the authority of letters sealed by her with the king's signet, the unhappy Jezreelite was accused of blasphemy at a public feast, for which he was stoned to death, and his possessions confiscated to the crown. Jezebel then gleefully apprised the king that the coveted vineyard was his, and doubtless informed him in which way it had been acquired. Ahab then hastened to inspect his new possession, but he had scarcely entered the place when the most unexpected and unwelcome sight of the prophet Elijah met his view. His conscience made known to him the errand of his stern monitor, and, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" burst from his lips. Elijah answered, "I have found thee, because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the eyes of Jehovah." He then proceeded, in that great name, and in words every one of which bore a terrible emphasis, to denounce the doom of utter extermination upon himself and his house, for the iniquities with which he had polluted the land; and then, with a pointed reference to the last most iniquitous deed, he said, "Hast thou slain and also taken possession? In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood—even thine." And as for Jezebel, he foretold a coming time in which dogs should devour her by the wall of Jezreel.

Ahab was greatly terrified at this message, and for once "he humbled himself before the Lord." His humiliation, indeed, was merely formal and superficial; yet, as he allowed the justice of God and acknowledged his sin, the Lord had pity upon him, and was pleased to grant a respite of judgment, so far as regarded his family, and he was spared the anguish of witnessing the ruin of his house.

While the land of Israel was thus, during the reign of Ahab, frequently distracted by intestine calamities and foreign wars, the kingdom of Judah enjoyed profound tranquillity and increasing prosperity under the mild and pious government of Jehoshaphat, the son and successor of Asa. This excellent prince began to reign 929 B.C., being the third year of Ahab in Israel. He commenced his reign by reforming the religious abuses which had crept in during the later years of his father's life, or which he had not in his best years ventured to remove. Thus he not only destroyed the idols, and every vestige of idolatry throughout his dominions, but even demolished "the high places," which were not directly idolatrous, but at which an irregular worship, often merging into idolatry, was carried on. He indeed went deeper than any other king in his salutary reformations. He knew that all these corruptions were but the outward signs, the visible excrescences, of the disease of ignorance, and that every remedy must be insufficient which left untouched the inner and exciting cause. He therefore took measures to provide for the people sound instruction in the law of God at their own homes—in their several towns and villages; and so much interest did he manifest in this matter, that he made a tour through the country to see that his beneficent intentions were carried into effect. A thorough reformation was by such means wrought in the land of Judah; and the king's devotedness to God and his paternal government were rewarded by the attachment of his subjects, and by a degree of temporal prosperity such as had not been enjoyed by any king since Solomon.

Ahab was at no time in a condition to seek or gain any advantage over so prosperous a neighbour; and by this time the kings of Judah had come to consider the existence of the separate kingdom as an accomplished fact, in which they could not but acquiesce. On this basis a sort of friendship, or rather absence of hostility, grew up between them, of which we observe the first manifest signs in the time of Jehoshaphat and Ahab. This might seem in itself a good, but, considering the unequal condition of the two kingdoms, was more likely to be detrimental to Judah than beneficial to Israel. And this proved to be the case. Jehoshaphat could not be insensible to the vile character of Ahab and his queen; and it is not likely that he was the first to seek the alliance. But a certain degree of softness which we may trace in his character, and which, however amiable in private life, misbecame him as a king, seems to have rendered him incapable of resisting the flattering advances of Ahab; and from one step to another the intimacy at length became so close, that Jehoshaphat consented to the marriage of his heir with Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. The alliance being thus strengthened, we cease to be surprised to find the king of Judah present at the court of Israel. This was after the events which have already been recorded; and when Ahab was preparing for a campaign against the Syrians, who, having recovered strength, had invaded the territories of Israel east of the Jordan, and made themselves masters of the important fortified town of Ramoth-Gilead, he invited Jehoshaphat to join in this expedition, and the latter, as usual, too easily consented. He was not, however, accustomed to embark in any important undertaking without consulting the Lord through a prophet or the high-priest; and he therefore intimated a wish that this should be done on the present occasion. Ahab had no lack of pretended prophets, and they with one accord promised a signal victory over the Syrians. Jehoshaphat, however, was not satisfied, and asked if there was no other prophet of Jehovah whom they might consult. Ahab admitted that there was another, named Micaiah, but declared that he hated him, because he never prophesied good of him, but evil. He was, nevertheless, sent for; and with great dignity and force of language he declared that the expedition would be fatal to the king himself, but not disastrous to his army. On this Ahab, in a high rage, commanded him to be kept in prison on mouldy bread and unwholesome water till his return in peace. The prediction of Micaiah, however, sunk into his mind, and to avoid his doom, he proposed, under pretence of honouring Jehoshaphat with the chief command, that he should wear his royal robes in the action, while himself would go disguised as one of his officers. This expedient had nearly cost Jehoshaphat his life, as the Syrian soldiers, according to their instructions, made it their object to kill the king or take him prisoner; but when they perceived their error, they desisted. Yet Ahab escaped not. An arrow "shot at a venture" penetrated the joints of his harness, and inflicted a mortal wound. He then withdrew from the field to have his wound dressed, but, being anxious not to discourage his troops, he hastened back to the battle, and towards evening died in his chariot. As soon as his death was known, hostilities ceased on both sides, and the Israelites dispersed quietly to their own homes without defeat or loss. Thus was the prediction of Micaiah to the very letter fulfilled. The body of Ahab was carried to Samaria, and buried there. The chariot, soaked with his blood, was washed in the pool of Jezreel, and there, according to the prediction of Elijah, did the town dogs lick up his blood, as they had before licked that of Naboth. Ahab was succeeded by his son Ahaziah, B.C. 909.

Jehoshaphat, on his return to Jerusalem, was reproved by the prophet Jehu for this disastrous alliance. He was sensible of his error, and endeavoured to atone for it by renewed exertions in promoting the observance of the divine law in his own kingdom; and in the course of these operations, finding that many abuses and irregularities had grown up in the administration of justice among his people, he applied himself with his wonted zeal and judgment to the correction of this abuse. He established judges and courts of justice in every town of note throughout his dominions, with a right of appeal to the superior courts at Jerusalem. The new magistrates were solemnly charged by the king to execute the duties of their office in the constant fear of God, without being swayed by partialities or corrupt interest; and having completed this his second great reform, he returned to Jerusalem.

Ahaziah, the son and successor of Ahab, maintained, under the influence of his mother Jezebel, the corruption which had disgraced his father's reign. The alliance between the courts of Israel and Judah was, however, renewed, and resulted in the joint undertaking of the two kings to re-establish the trade by the Dead Sea, which had proved so profitable in the time of Solomon. The undertaking, however, proved abortive, chiefly through the ignorance of the mariners, who could not steer their ships through the straits of Ezion-Geber, which are to this day encumbered with a dangerous ridge of rocks. Being warned that this disaster was a punishment for allowing an impious prince to take part in the enterprise, Jehoshaphat declined to permit Ahaziah to have any in the next fleet, which he fitted out from the port of Elath. This voyage was successful; but the particulars are not related, and the troubles of the next reign, involving the loss of the ports on the Dead Sea by the revolt of Edom, prevented this lucrative trade from being prosecuted.

Ahaziah did not long survive the failure of his attempt to obtain gold from Ophir. He sustained severe injuries, which at length brought him to the grave, by a fall through a lattice. In his illness he sent messengers to consult the oracle of Baalzebub (god of flies), at Ekron, respecting his recovery. The messengers were met by Elijah, who ordered them to return, and inform their master that he "would not come down from the bed on which he had gone up, but should surely die." On hearing this, Ahaziah sent an officer and men to apprehend the prophet; but at the word of that awful personage they were destroyed by fire from heaven. But, having thus asserted the extraordinary authority with which he was invested, he was encouraged by an angel to go before the king; and to him he repeated with terrible reprehension the sentence of death which had gone forth from heaven against him, and which, accordingly, soon after took effect. Ahaziah was succeeded by his brother Jehoram.

SUNDAY XXXIX.—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

THE doctrine of Christ was daily advocated by Paul in public, during his stay in Jerusalem, especially among those foreign Jews, speaking the Greek language, who had come to the holy city. These became at last so exasperated against one who had lately been so distinguished a member of their own body, that they formed a plan for causing him to be put to death as an apostate. On the other hand, the prospect opened to him of a wider sphere of action among heathen nations. As he was one day in the temple, and by prayer lifting up his soul to the Lord, he was borne aloft from earthly things. In a vision he received an assurance from the Lord, that although he would be able to effect nothing in Jerusalem, through the animosity of the Jews, he was destined to carry the doctrine of salvation to other nations and to remote regions. Accordingly, after a stay of only a fortnight at Jerusalem, he was obliged to leave it through the machinations of the Jews. He now returned to Tarsus, his native place, where he spent several years, certainly not inactively, for by his labours the Gospel was spread both among Jews and Gentiles in Tarsus and throughout Cilicia; and there is good reason for believing that to him the Gentile churches, which in a short time we find in Cilicia, owed their origin.

During this interval the turn of public affairs in Judea became, upon the accession of the Emperor Caligula, so critical and exciting to the Jews, that it engaged all their interest and attention. Under this influence the persecution of the followers of Jesus abated, and the churches thus obtained an interval of rest, by which they were strengthened for new conflicts. Peter availed himself of this to make a tour through the country, to visit and strengthen the communities of believers. In the course of this journey he came to Lydda, a town six miles inland from Joppa, on the road from Jerusalem.

Here his attention was directed to a man named Eneas, who, from his Greek name, was probably a Hellenist Jew, and had been for eight years kept to his bed with the palsy. Him Peter cured; commanding him to arise from the bed on which he had lain so long, in words carefully framed to refer all the power and glory of the act to Jesus. He said, "Eneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole; arise and make thy bed." This signal miracle made a strong and convincing impression upon the minds of many persons in that neighbourhood, who thereupon "turned to the Lord."

At Joppa there was among the believers an excellent woman named Tabitha (in Greek, Dorcas), who "was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did." This woman was taken ill and died, and the body was prepared in the usual manner for interment, and laid out in an upper chamber. As Lydda, where Peter was known then to be, was not far from Joppa, the disciples sent to him tidings of this heavy loss to the church, and desired his presence, to sustain and comfort them in their affliction. The apostle immediately obeyed the call, and went over to Joppa. He was, by his own desire, conducted to the chamber where the corpse lay, and was much moved when he witnessed the lamentations of the poor widow women who had been supported by her beneficence, and who recounted to one another the charitable deeds of their benefactress. Peter desired to be left alone with the body; and then he kneeled down and prayed, probably with more agonizing fervour than he desired that they should witness. His faith being thus strengthened, he turned to the body, and cried, "Tabitha, arise." She then opened her eyes, as one awakening from sleep, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. He then presented her his hand, and she arose, and was presented alive to those who had so lately bewailed her dead. This was the first miracle of the kind which was performed by the apostles, and it produced an impression fully corresponding to its importance.

After this, Peter remained some time at Joppa, dwelling with one Simon, a tanner, whose house was by the sea-shore.

Joppa was but a few miles south from Cæsarea, which was the seat of the Roman governor, and the political metropolis of Judea. In the Roman cohort which formed the garrison of that place was a Centurion named Cornelius, a Gentile, who, dissatisfied with the old popular religion, and seeking after one which would tranquillize his mind, had been led to Judaism, and had become a proselyte of the gate. Having with his whole family professed the worship of Jehovah, he testified by his benefactions the sympathy which he felt with his fellow-worshippers of the Jewish nation, and observed the hour of prayer customary among the Jews. It was customary with the Jews, and became so with the early Christians, to devote themselves to fasting and prayer when, in any emergency from inward or outward distress, they sought relief and illumination from God. In some such emergency Cornelius had for some days fasted and prayed before God. What was it that troubled him? It may be supposed that he was disturbed by the various opinions which he heard respecting the doctrine of Christ, and his only object and interest being to find in the truth rest to his soul, he sought in earnest prayer, accompanied by fasting, guidance in the right way. While he was thus engaged, he beheld an angel, who was sent to apprise him that his abundant alms were accepted as an evidence of piety towards God, and he was enjoined to send to Joppa for Peter, who was able to instruct him in all truth. No sooner had Cornelius received this gladdening intimation, than he sent two slaves, and a soldier who waited on him, to solicit the presence of the long wished for teacher and guide.

But it was necessary that Peter himself should be prepared for a call so unexpected, and so adverse to the notions which still filled his mind, that the blessings and promises of the Gospel were limited to the seed of Abraham.

It was about noon the next day when Peter withdrew to the flat roof of the house in which he lodged, in order to offer up his mid-day devotions. He then beheld, as in a vision, a multitude of various beasts collected together, and a voice was heard, "Arise, Peter; slay and eat." At this, although hungry, he demurred, seeing that most of the beasts were such as the Jewish law declared unfit for food. He said, therefore, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean." The voice answered, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." While Peter mused as to the purport of this vision, the messengers from Cornelius came inquiring for him, and the mystery on which he pondered was unravelled when the voice enjoined him to go with them "nothing doubting." He accordingly departed on the following day, accompanied by six other disciples, to whom he had imparted the matter, and who awaited the result with eager expectation. As the distance was too great for one day's journey, they made two of it, and it was not until the fourth day from the departure of the messengers that they arrived at Cæsarea. When at length the Centurion saw the holy man cross his threshold, he fell down at the feet of one whom, after what had passed, he was disposed to regard as a super-earthly being. Peter, however, raised him with the words, "Stand up, I myself also am a man." Cornelius, in expectation of the arrival of the divinely appointed teacher, had assembled his household and friends to meet him, forming, with those who accompanied Peter, a considerable audience, to which he proceeded to explain how he had been taught to disregard the common scruples of the Jews respecting intercourse with heathens, which would have precluded him from attending to the call, or from coming under that roof. Cornelius in like manner explained how he had been induced to send for Peter, and concluded with expressing an anxious desire to hear the things which God had commissioned him to speak. Peter was affected and astonished; his perceptions were enlarged in witnessing this anxiety for divine truth in one who had been born and brought up in the midst of heathen abominations; and he expressed his conviction in the remarkable words, "Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." He proceeded to preach to them the doctrine of Christ. His words fell like dew from heaven upon their thirsty souls, and as he proceeded they were impelled to express their feelings in inspired praises to God, who had in so wonderful a manner led them to salvation. This clear act of God upon their minds, taken in connection with the other circumstances, prevented any of the Jewish Christians present from urging objections when Peter proposed that these Gentiles should be baptized into the church of Christ; and the same facts furnished Peter with unanswerable grounds of justification, when his conduct, in thus unclosing the gates of hope to the Gentiles, was shortly afterwards called in question.

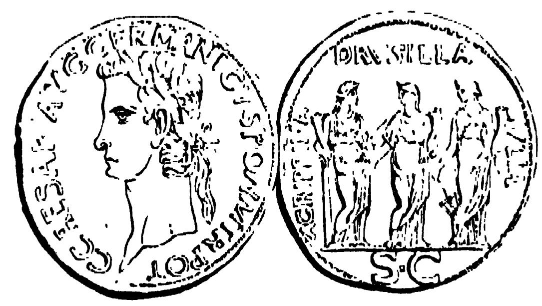
Peter, on his return to Jerusalem, found that his having admitted Gentiles to the privileges of the Gospel was little relished by the Jewish converts, who had hitherto not apprehended that such privileges were other than the peculiar heritage of the seed of Abraham. They were not, however, selfishly desirous of engrossing these privileges; for when they understood, from the plain account of the matter which the apostle gave them, that such was the will of God, "They held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath also God granted to the Gentiles repentance unto life."



982. —Peter and Paul. (Guido Reni.)
Petr a Paul.



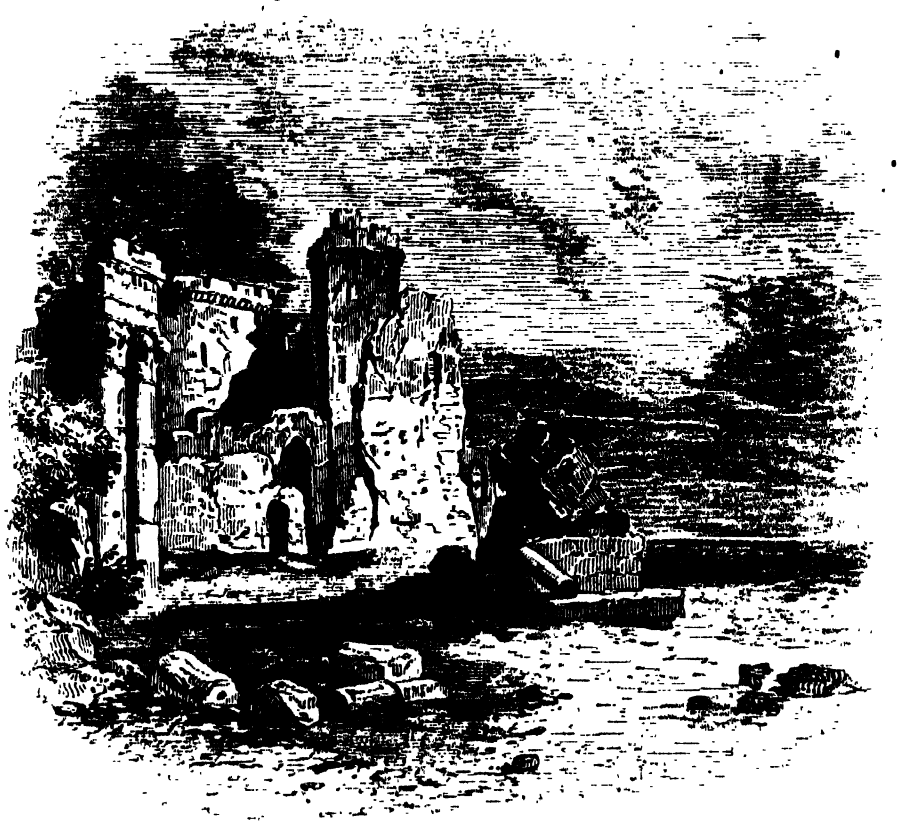
983.—Deliverance of St. Peter.
Gwaredigaeth St. Petr.



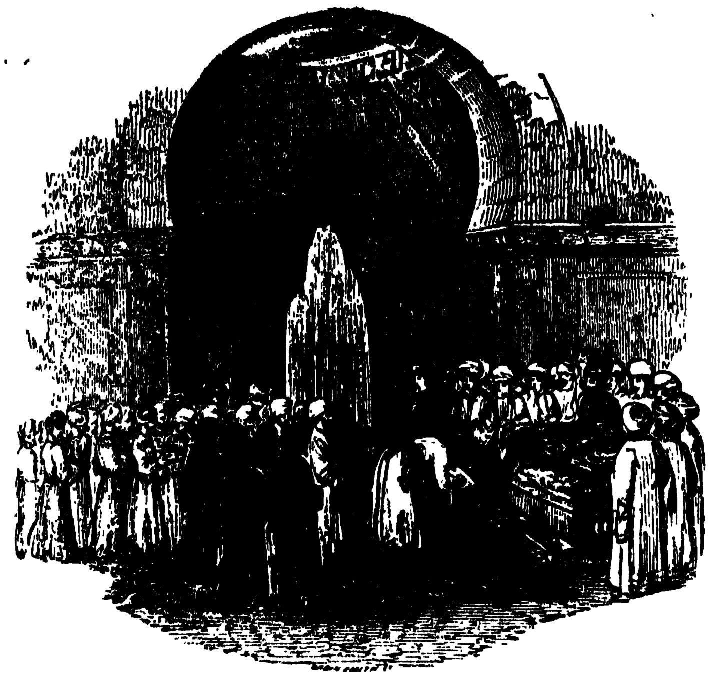
984.—Caligula.



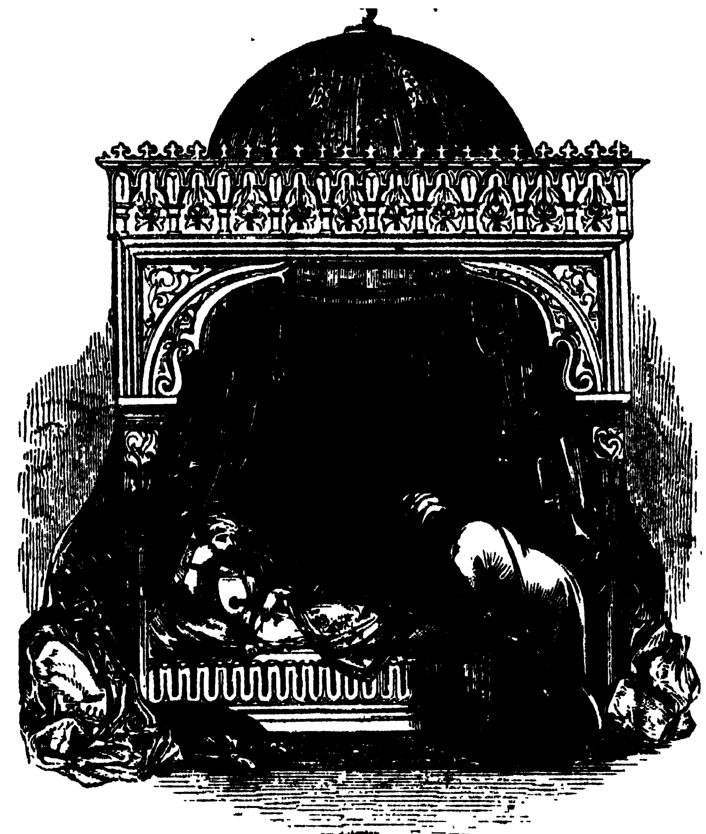
985. —Martyrdom of St. James.
Merthyrdod St. Iago.



986.—Ruins of Cæsarea, in Palestine.
Adfeilion Cesarea, yn Palestina.



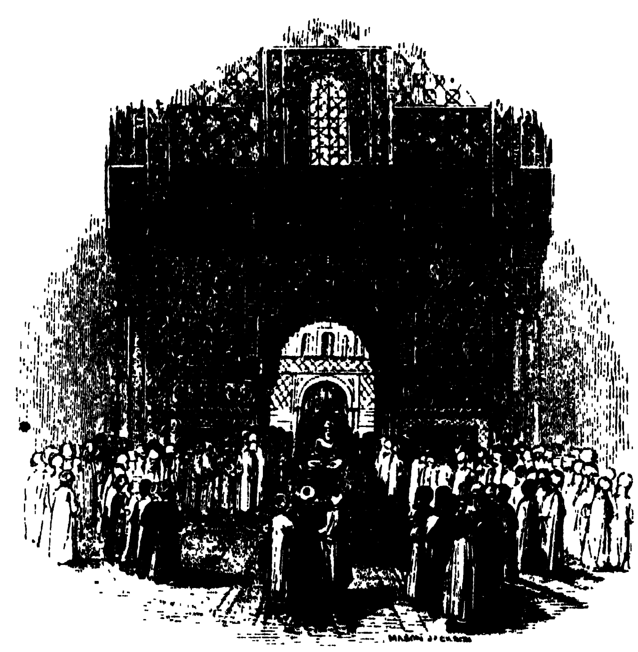
989.—Audience with an Eastern Monarch.
Gwrandawiad gan Benadur Dwyreiniol.



987.—Eastern King and Chief of the Eunuchs.
Brenin Dwyreiniol a Phril Eunuch.



990.—Daniel Interpreting the Writing on the Wall.
Daniel yn deongli yr Ysgrifen ar y Pared.



988.—Presentation to an Eastern King.
Cyflwyniad i Frenin Dwyreiniol.



991.—Eastern Astrologer.
Dewin Dwyreiniol.



992.—Eastern Magician.
Gwr doeth Dwyreiniol.

SUNDAY XL.—DANIEL.

NOT content with thus faithfully interpreting the dream, Daniel in the depth of his concern ventured to let fall a word of counsel. "Wherefore, O king," he said, "let my counsel be acceptable to thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing kindness to the poor; perhaps it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity."

This doubtless made some temporary impression upon the king: but such impressions have seldom great effect in changing a pervading bent of mind. At the end of about twelve months, as Nebuchadnezzar was walking on the roof of his palace, with all the glories of Babylon, which he had made the greatest city in the world, spread out before him, he was lost in the contemplation of his own greatness and the magnificence with which he was surrounded. "Is not this," he cried, "great Babylon, which I have built for a royal habitation by the might of my power and for the honour of my majesty?" The words had scarcely passed his lips, when he heard a voice from heaven saying, "O king Nebuchadnezzar, thy kingdom is departed from thee!" And in that same hour his reason departed from him—he was smitten with a singular disease of mind, which unfitted him not only for the rule of kingdoms, but for the society of men. He was then suffered to follow the bent of his diseased impulse, under which he appears to have supposed himself transformed into a beast; and he went forth into the parks and meadows, where he abode among the cattle, and lived on vegetables. In this mad and savage state he remained, his body being nightly wetted by the dews of heaven, till his hair grew out like the plumage of eagles, and his nails like the claws of birds.

The account of these transactions is given in a proclamation which Nebuchadnezzar issued after his recovery. He there states, that after continuing in this state for seven years, "Mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and glorified him that liveth for ever and ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom from generation to generation." This was the result which had been sought by this awful visitation: and no sooner had he realized the conviction that "the Most High doeth according to his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"—than his kingdom and his glory were restored to him. His nobles and courtiers repaired to him, as soon as the change was known; he was once more invested with the imperial purple, and re-conducted reverently to his throne. "Now," the proclamation concluded, "I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, and extol, and glorify the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment; *and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.*"

Nebuchadnezzar did not long survive his restoration; and the reign of his son and successor Evil-merodach was of short duration—as he was in 561 B.C. slain in a battle with the Medes and Persians. He was succeeded by his son Belshazzar. The end only of this monarch's reign is noticed in the narrative of Daniel; but from other sources we obtain information respecting acts in the early part of his reign, of which only a barbarous and jealous tyrant could have been capable. His last and most heinous offence was the profanation of the sacred vessels of the temple of Jerusalem, which had been respected by his illustrious grandfather, and even by his incapable father. He made a great feast "to a thousand of his lords," and ordered the sacred vessels to be brought, that he and wassailers might drink wine from them. That there was in this a studied insult to the Most High God, whom Nebuchadnezzar had been taught by many severe lessons to hold in reverence, is plain from the words in which the account is given:—"He praised the gods of gold, silver, brass, iron, and stone; but THE GOD in whose hand was his breath, and whose were all his ways, he glorified not." In the midst of this profane revelry, a hand suddenly appeared writing words of mysterious import upon the wall, over against the king. The monarch was sobered in an instant. The writing was unintelligible to him, for, although the words were, as appears from the sequel, written in the vernacular Chaldean language, the characters were the old Hebrew, with which he was unacquainted. The attendance of the magi and astrologers was then commanded: but they were quite unable to read the words, much less to give an explanation of them. This increased the alarm of the impious king; and when the terror was at its height, the queen-mother (or rather, perhaps, grandmother) made her appearance, and reminded him of Daniel, whom she mentioned as one "in whom is the spirit of THE HOLY GOD, and in the days of thy grandfather, light and understanding, and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him." That Belshazzar needed to be thus reminded of the character and services of Daniel, seems to imply that he no longer retained his high offices at court, but had withdrawn into private life. It was the custom in most Oriental courts for the archimagus, or the officer whose station corresponded the nearest to that which Daniel occupied, to lose his office on the death of the king to whose court he was attached; and this was probably the case in Babylon. It is, however, supposed by some that Daniel, in prospect of events then rapidly approaching, had voluntarily withdrawn from court, to avoid an official connection with the fortunes, and thereby involve himself in the ruin, of a falling house. But those who offer this conjecture forget, or do not know that the acceptance or abandonment of court employments is not, and never was optional in any Eastern kingdom.

Daniel was sent for; and the king repeated what he had heard of him, and explained the circumstance which required his presence. The monarch promised that if he could but explain the mysterious words, his rewards should be the highest in his power to bestow—he should be clothed in scarlet, be privileged to wear a chain of gold, and should rank as the third person in the kingdom. But such honours were valueless in the sight of the venerable prophet, who had already filled the highest stations at court, and to whom the future was open as a book. "Thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; nevertheless, I will read the writing to the king." And he did so. It was not enough to read off the mere words as they stood. It is probable that any educated Jew among the captives in Babylon could have done that; but it was necessary that the true import should be affixed to words which were in themselves merely indicative of the great prophetic truths hidden in them. This required a prophet instructed from on high, and was such a task as no man then in Babylon, save Daniel, could accomplish. Before proceeding to explain these great words the prophet undauntedly reminded the king of the experiences and resulting convictions of his renowned grandfather, adding—"And thou, his grandson, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thy heart, though thou knewest all this." He then proceeded to read the inscription—

MENE (*number*), MENE (*number*), TEKEL (*weight*), PERES (*division*), UPHARSIN (*and divisions*); and explained the words thus:—

MENE, God hath *numbered* thy reign.

[MENE], and *finished* it (the repetition of the word giving intensity and completeness to the signification)

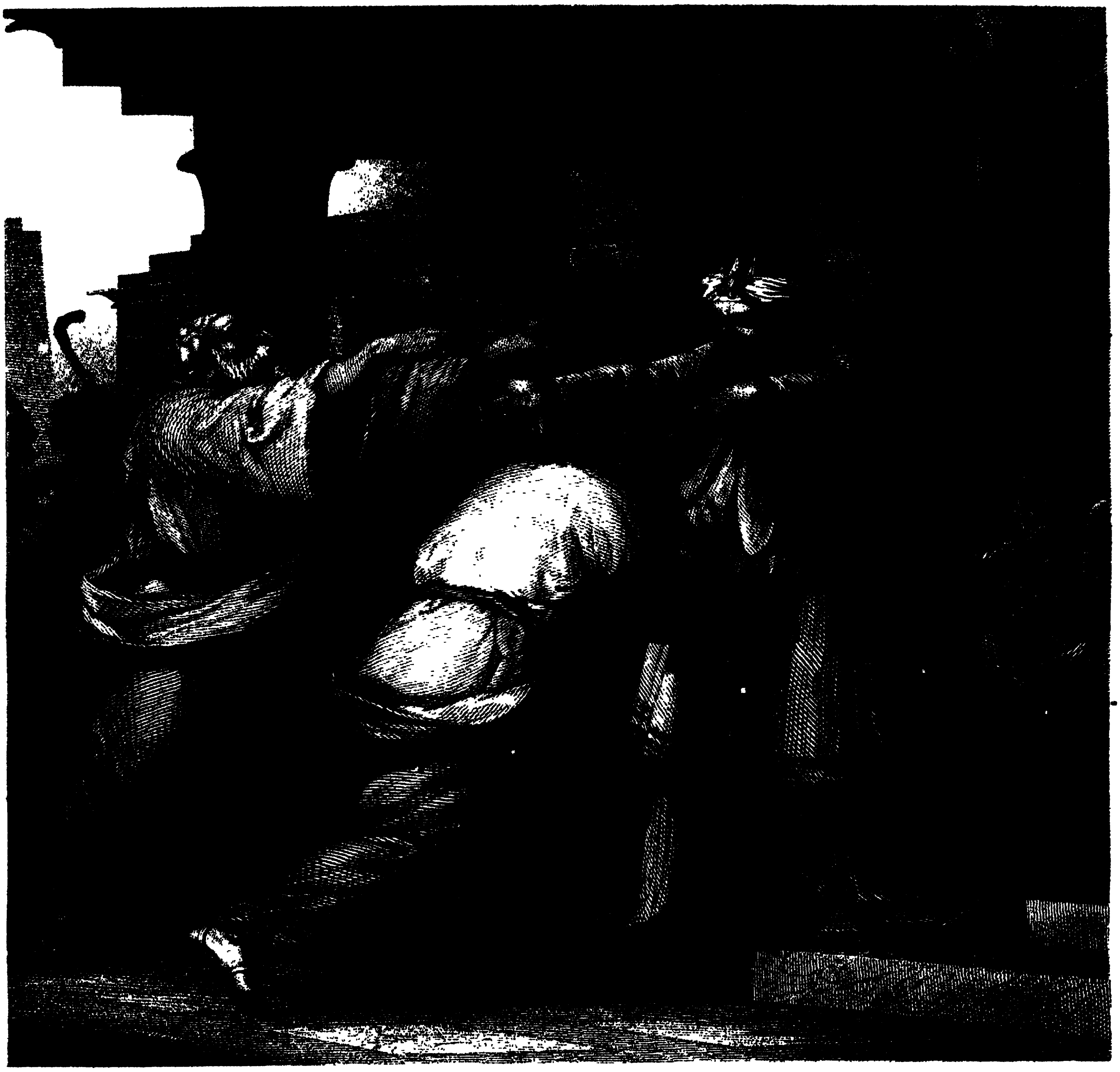
TEKEL, thou art weighed in the balance, and found wanting.

PERES, thy kingdom is *divided*.

UPHARSIN, *and* given to the Mede and the Persian [Darius and Cyrus].

The king understood this well. His mind took in all the fearful significance of these oracular sentences. But he royally restrained his emotions, and dismissed the prophet, with orders that the promised rewards should be bestowed upon him. The sacred historian adds—"That same night was Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, slain." How he came by his death we are not told; but we may collect from Xenophon that he perished through a conspiracy against his life by two nobles upon whom he had inflicted the highest indignities which men could receive. He was succeeded by his son Laborosoarchod, a boy, who died in less than a year, in consequence of which the Scriptural account relates, as immediately following the death of Belshazzar, that "Darius the Mede took the kingdom." The family of Nebuchadnezzar was in fact extinct, and the Median king Darius (the Cyaxares of secular history), the brother of the queen-mother, took the kingdom, as next of kin, through her, to the Chaldean crown. The claim of Darius may not have been very strong; but it was as strong as any which could be opposed to it, and was backed by a power which had risen very high under the generalship of his nephew Cyrus, and which no power in those parts was in a condition to oppose.

The express indication of his succession which Daniel had given in his interpretation of the mysterious writing, was also calculated to overawe competition by giving the authority of a supernatural sanction to his succession.

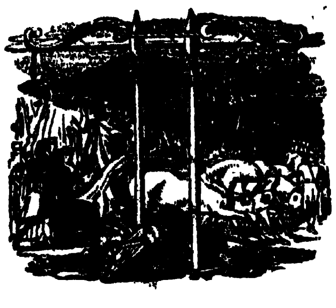


Belshazzar investing Daniel with a Chain

Daniel, V. 29.

THE LONDON PRINTING AND PUBLISHING COMPANY, LIMITED.

SUNDAY XL.—BIBLE HISTORY.



HE prophet Elijah, having previously received the divine intimation that the Lord was about to distinguish him from the rest of mankind by translating him into heaven without undergoing death, and now knowing that the day was at hand, visited the sons or pupils of the prophets at Bethel and Jericho, and took leave of them with such solemnity, that they were impressed with the conviction that they should see him no more. This conviction was shared by the prophet's destined successor, Elisha, who therefore resolved not to leave his side till he saw the result. They came to the Jordan, where the prophet took off his mantle, and smote therewith the waters, which divided to give him a passage over. When they had reached the eastern bank, the great prophet told Elisha that the time was come for him to prefer his last request. The other, with a strong feeling of the importance of the duties which were about to devolve upon him, answered, "Let a double portion of thy spirit rest upon me." Elijah told him that he had asked "a hard thing;" but, he added, "nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee." As they went on, engaged in earnest conversation, suddenly "there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder, and Elijah went up in a whirlwind into heaven."

The falling mantle was, according to the still existing customs of the East, an emblem of his bequeathing to Elisha the office which he had himself filled; and on his return to Jericho the latter tested the virtue of the bequest by smiting the waters of the Jordan as his master had done, asking, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" The call was answered; the waters were sundered before him; and the young prophets of Jericho, who stood watching in the distance, knew by this sign their future master.

The other miracles performed by Elisha are related with considerable detail in the Scripture, and were so signal and important, as soon evinced to the court and people of Israel that in him God had raised up another witness for the truth in the midst of a corrupt generation.

Two of the earliest of these followed almost immediately the above transactions, and were well calculated to authenticate his mission in the sight of the people. The town of Jericho was favourably situated, but the water of the principal spring was unwholesome, probably saline, and useless for drink or irrigation. When this was represented to Elisha, he took a new vessel full of salt, and repairing to the spring head, cast in the salt, and from that moment the waters were sweetened, "and there was no more death or barren land."

The next was an act of judgment: he was going up from Jericho to Bethel, the seat of one of the golden calves, when some of the youths of that polluted city insulted him as he passed, and followed him with shouts of "Go up, thou bald head! go up, thou bald head!" thereby deriding the recent translation of Elijah into heaven, and mockingly urging the prophet to go up after his master. Feeling that God was himself mocked in this derision of an event so signal and so glorious, and knowing that he was wont to vindicate the honour of his great deeds, Elisha "turned back and cursed them in the name of the Lord." These blasphemous young men saw their homes no more; for, ere they could return, two she bears came forth upon them out of the wood and destroyed them; and many houses in the sinful city were filled with wailing that day.

Jehoram, the new king of Israel, was of a somewhat better disposition than his father and brother. He discountenanced the worship of Baal, but made no attempt to break down the corruptions and evils which Jeroboam had introduced, and which, in the course of time, had more and more become a habit with the people.

The first public measure of Jehoram was to reduce the Moabites, who, in consequence of the heavy tribute in cattle which had been imposed upon them by Ahab, had revolted after he had been slain by the Syrians. Jehoshaphat was prevailed upon to join him with his forces in this expedition, probably from the fear that the revolt, if successful, might encourage his own tributary, the king of Edom, to follow the example. The army of Israel, to avoid crossing the Jordan, marched southward through the land of Judah, with the view of invading the land of Moab, by going round by the southern extremity of the Dead Sea, and in its march was joined by the forces of Judah and Edom. This circuitous route occupied seven days, towards the end of which the army and horses were greatly distressed from thirst, probably occasioned by the failure of the wells and brooks, from which a sufficient supply had been expected. Already much loss and discouragement had been sustained, and the army now lay on the border of Moab, and in the face of the enemy, who had assembled in force to repel the invasion. In this extremity the good Jehoshaphat, as usual, thought of seeking counsel of God through one of his prophets; and on inquiring for one, it was found that Elisha, "who had poured water on the hands of Elijah," was present in the camp. To him the kings of Judah, Israel, and Edom at once repaired. His greeting, addressed to Jehoram, was not very encouraging: "What have I to do with thee? Get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother!" and he added, that were it not from respect to Jehoshaphat, he would not have admitted them to his presence. But now he called for a minstrel, and as the minstrel played upon his harp, "the hand of the Lord came upon him," and he promised that ere the morning dawn water should be abundant; and also that victory should crown their arms. And so it came pass. Before the morning the dried-up beds of the torrents and rivulets were filled to overflowing; and in the action which followed, the Moabites were utterly defeated, and the victors in their pursuit of the army desolated the country with fire and sword, till they arrived before Kir-haraseth, a strong city, into which the king of Moab had thrown himself. Here he was soon reduced to such extremities that he made a desperate sally at the head of seven hundred valiant swordsmen, in the hope of forcing his way through the lines of the besiegers. Being foiled in this, he resorted to the horrid expedient of endeavouring to render his cruel gods propitious by offering up to them in sacrifice his only son—the heir of his throne. He did this publicly, upon the very walls, in the face of the besiegers, who were so horror-struck at the sight, that they immediately raised the siege and departed to their own homes. This movement, however natural, probably had the lamentable effect of encouraging the king of Moab to believe that his dreadful act had been effectual in bringing down from his gods the desired relief.

The Moabites seem to have been highly exasperated at the part taken by Jehoshaphat in this expedition: for not long after we find them united with kindred and neighbouring nations in a most formidable invasion of his territories. They formed their camp near Engedi, and their force seemed so overwhelming, that Jehoshaphat felt at once that he was utterly unable to meet them in the field, and that he had no resource but in God, whom he might infer to have been offended at his alliance with the unclean court of Israel. He therefore, and the people with him, betook himself to prayer and supplication, and was answered by the assurance that the invaders should fall without one stroke from his sword. He then marched out against them; but when he came "to the watch-tower in the wilderness," and there obtained the first view of the enemy's camp, "behold, they were all dead bodies fallen to the earth!" They had, it seems, quarrelled among themselves, probably about the division of the spoil, and had fought together with such desperate animosity that none escaped. The Hebrews were occupied for three days in gathering the abundant spoil, which was of immense value. They then returned laden with wealth to Jerusalem, which they entered to the sound of psalteries and harps, rejoicing in the favour of God, who had blessed them with success so signal and so unexpected.

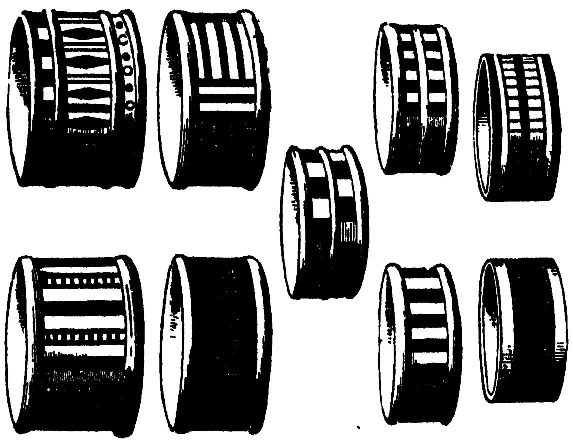
This event instilled into the minds of the neighbouring nations a salutary dread of the good king, and the remainder of his reign was spent in profound peace. He died in B.C. 904, after he had lived sixty years and reigned twenty-five.

He was succeeded on the throne by his son Jehoram, who had wedded Athalia, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel; and whose conduct soon evinced the malignant and fatal influence of this connection. When we consider the subsequent conduct of his wife, there is little room to question that the measures of Jehoram were stimulated by the counsels of the daughter of Jezebel.

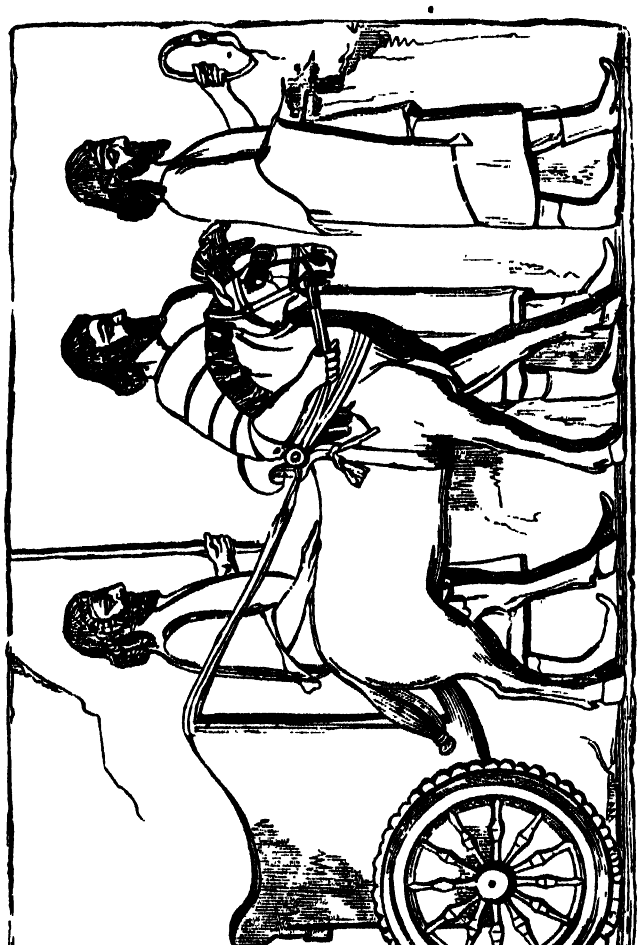
Immediately upon his accession, Jehoram concentrated the claims of the royal line in his own person by destroying all his brethren. He then proceeded to subvert the worship of Jehovah, and introduced the Phoenician idolatries, which had caused so much calamity in the neighbouring kingdom, and which had hitherto been unexampled in Judah. In Jerusalem the mass of the people were induced by the influence and example of the court, and in other parts of the country by persecutors, to give in to these new abominations. For this the prophet of Israel, Elisha, was commissioned to denounce the divine vengeance against Jehoram and his family.



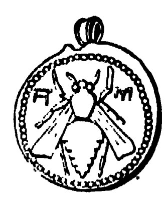
993.—Ancient Egyptian Chariot. (From a Bas-relief.)
Hen Gerbyd Aiphtaidd. (Oddi wrth Safun.)



995.—Ancient Egyptian Armlets.
Hen Freichledau Aiphtaidd.



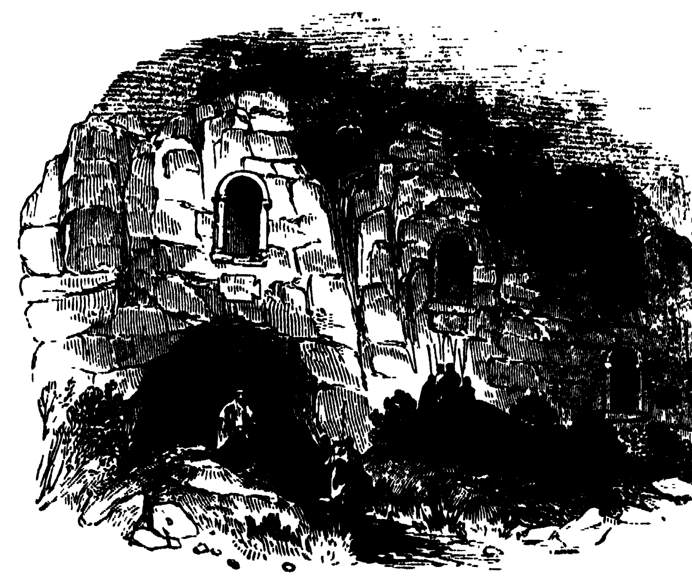
994.—Ancient Persian Chariot. (From a Persepolitan Bas-relief in the British Museum.)
Hen Gerbyd Aiphtaidd. (Oddiar Safun Persepolitaidd yn yr Amgueddfa Brydeinig.)



996.—Silver Coin of Aradus.
Arian Bath Aradus.



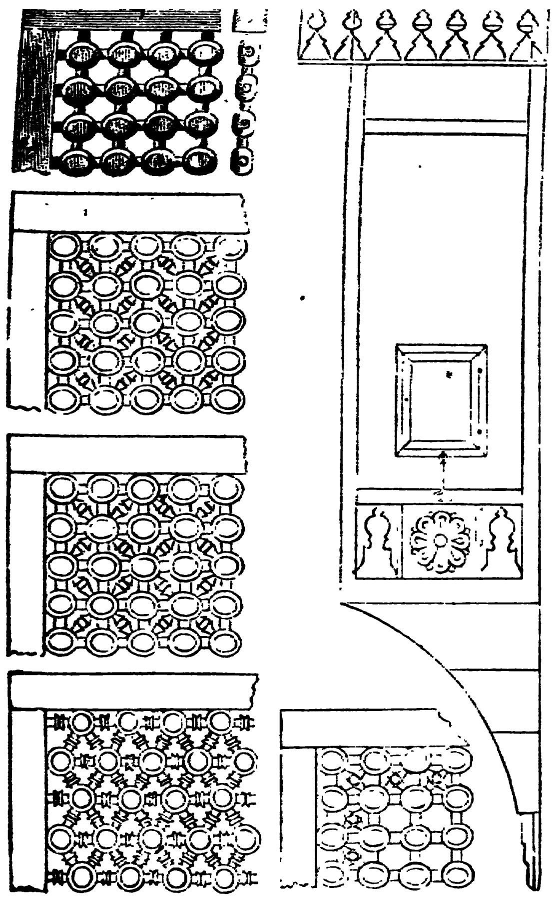
997.—Petra. Mount Seir. (From Laborde.)
Petra. Mynydd Seir. (O Laborde.)



998.—Supposed Source of the Jordan.
Ffynhonell dybiedig yr Iorddonen.



999.—Plain of Jericho.
Gwastadedd Jericho.



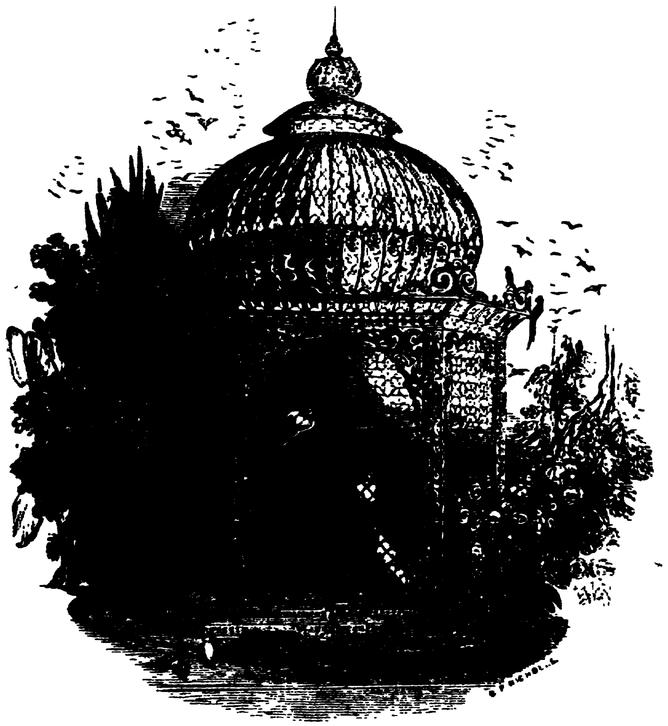
1005.—Specimen of Lattice-work.
Esiampl o Ddelltwaith.



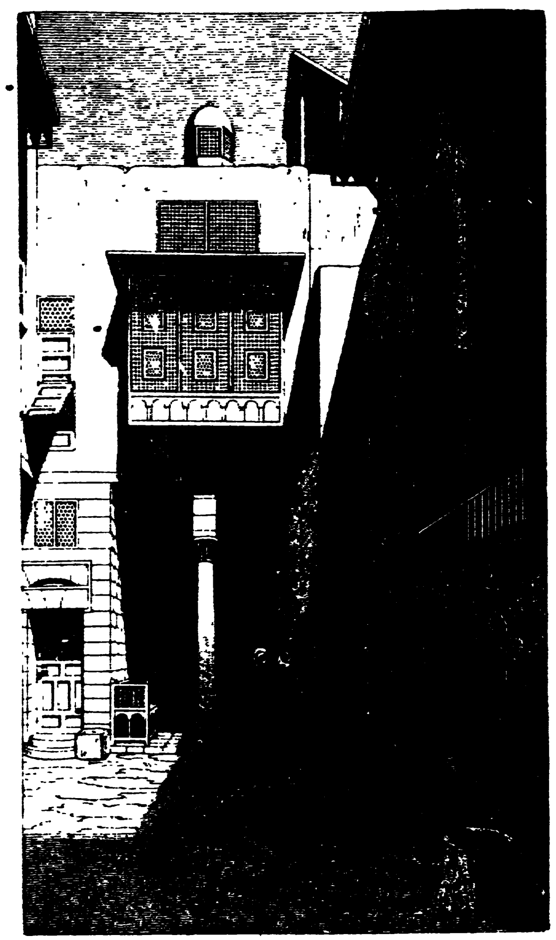
1000.—Elath.—Akaba. (Laborde.)



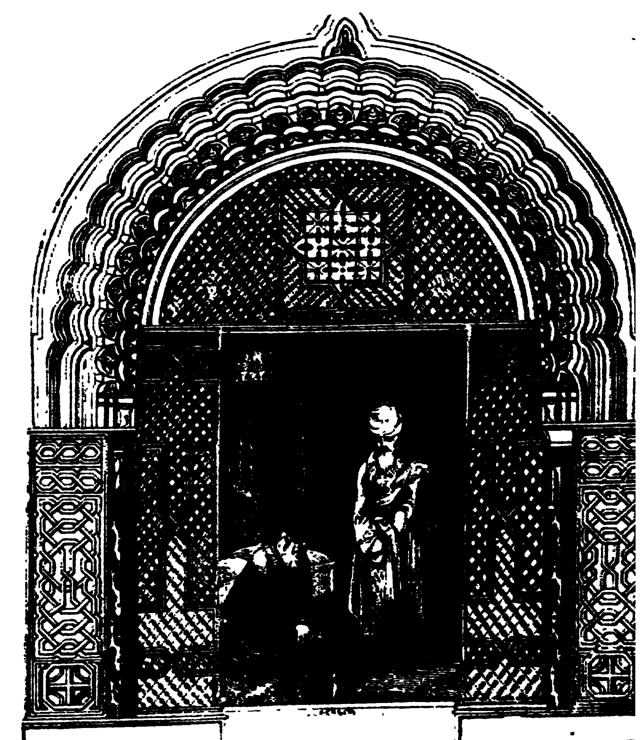
1002.—Lattice Window.
Ffenestr Ddellt.



1004.—Lattice Summer-house.
Haf-dy Dellt.



1001.—Exterior of Lattice Window.
Y Tu allan i Ffenestr Ddellt.



1003.—Lattice Door and Window.
Dôr a Ffenestr Ddellt.

The prophet discharged this awful duty by letter; and the doom which he predicted was not long delayed. First, Edom, which had since David been subject to Judah, revolted, and succeeded in casting off the yoke it had so impatiently borne. This sign of weakness encouraged other neighbouring nations to invade the land, which they plundered and laid waste. Even Jerusalem was entered; the treasures of the palace and the temple were plundered, and so great was the helplessness of the king and so utter his degradation, that even the sanctity of the royal harem was invaded, and all its fair inhabitants were carried off, save only Athaliah, the queen, who remained to be the source of future misery and punishment to Judah. All the royal princes were also slain except Ahaziah, otherwise called Jehoahaz, the youngest of them all. To complete these miseries, the miserable king was himself smitten with an incurable disease in the bowels, under which he languished for two years in horrible torments, and then died. The voice of the people denied to his remains the honours of a royal funeral and of a place in the sepulchres of the kings. 885 B. C.

Ahaziah, the only surviving son of Jehoram and Athaliah, then ascended the throne of Judah. Unhappily for him, "he walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedness." His near relationship to that house, the reigning king being his mother's brother, drew still closer the bands of intimacy between the two courts, and, in the event, involved him in that utter ruin of Ahab's house which had been denounced by Elijah.

In Israel, the "schools of the prophets" had come under the supervision of the prophet Elisha; and the next of his recorded acts was a miracle of benevolence in behalf of the widow of one of the "sons of the prophets." Having died without satisfying a debt he had incurred, the creditor purposed to indemnify himself by making bondsmen of the two sons. This Elisha prevented by so multiplying a small quantity of oil which the woman possessed, that the price for which it was sold enabled her to discharge the claim of the harsh creditor.

Another of his acts arose from the desire to make some suitable acknowledgment for the kindness of a benevolent pair, who observing how often the prophet passed on the way to Shunem, prepared for his separate use "a chamber upon the wall," furnishing it with a bed, a table, a seat, and a lamp, which at their solicitation he occupied whenever he came to Shunem. The hospitable couple were childless, and being informed by his servant Gehazi of their distress on that account, he foretold that in due time a child should be given to them in recompense for their kindness. A son was accordingly born, and lived, and grew up; but one day as he went forth to his father in the harvest-field, he was smitten, apparently by a sun-stroke, and complaining of his head, was taken back to the house, where he died upon his mother's lap. Elisha was then absent, having gone to Mount Carmel. The mother went and laid the child upon the prophet's bed, and causing an ass to be saddled, hurried away in search of him. Elisha recognised her at a distance, and sent his servant to meet her with inquiries after the welfare of her house. In answer to the question, "Is the child well?" she answered with touching significance, "He is well;" and without disclosing her errand, pressed forward to the prophet. She threw herself at his feet, and more by her tears than words made known her grief. The prophet was much moved, and delivering his staff to Gehazi, directed him to hasten on and lay it on the face of the child. The mother seems to have had small faith in this, and remained with the prophet, who at length concluded to return with her. They were met as they went, by Gehazi, who reported that he had followed his instructions, but that "the child was not awakened." On reaching the house, the prophet shut himself up with the child; and ere long he called for the mother, and presented to her the living boy.

Another time, when there was a scarcity in the land, Elisha was at the school of the prophets in Gilgal; and one day when their frugal meal of pottage had been prepared, it was found that a poisonous gourd had been shred into the pot by mistake. The young prophets cried out in much alarm, "O man of God, there is death in the pot!" and thereupon the prophet cast therein a handful of meal, when every noxious quality passed away.

The next event in the history of Elisha is the transaction between him and the Syrian general Naaman, the date of which is not easily fixed with exactness, and which may therefore be noticed in the place which it occupies in the sacred narrative.

Naaman was an able and successful commander, who stood very high in the favour of his master Ben-hadad: but he was afflicted with leprosy, which, from the narrative, would appear not to have disqualified from public service in the same degree as it would have done in Israel. Among the slaves of Naaman's wife was a little Hebrew girl, who had been among the prisoners taken in some one of the many incursions of the Syrians into the land of Israel. This girl, pitying the condition of her master, one day said to her mistress, "Would to God my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy." These words excited attention and inquiry, but were not very clearly understood; and when the king became acquainted with the matter, he said that Naaman should go with a letter from him to the king of Israel to be cured of his leprosy. The great man accordingly set forth with a noble retinue, and with camels laden with valuables intended for presents. When he came to Samaria he caused his letter to be delivered in all due form to the king, to whose presence as a leper he could not be admitted. The letter was to the effect that the king of Syria had sent his servant Naaman that the king of Israel might lay his hand upon him and cure him of his leprosy. On reading this, king Jehoram felt it as a mockery and insult. He rent his clothes and cried, "Am I a God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to cure a man of his leprosy?" and he could find no other motive for so unaccountable an application than in a desire to pick a quarrel with him. The news of this strange affair soon spread through the place, and reached the ears of Elisha, who forthwith sent to desire that the Syrian noble should be sent to him. Naaman, who by this time must have distrusted the success of his mission, gladly repaired to the abode of the prophet, and halted in his chariot, and with his grand retinue, before his door. As a leper he could not go into the house; and he expected that the prophet would come out and place his hands upon him, and that he should then recover. Instead of this, Elisha sent his servant to tell him to go and dip seven times in the river Jordan, and that he should then be clean. The pride of Naaman was offended at this message, and he cried "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters in Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?" So he turned and went away in a rage. His attendants, more calm, judged better of the order which he had received; and the chief of them, in the name of the rest, drew near respectfully, and said to him, "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather, then, when he saith unto thee, Wash, and be clean?" This reflection, so simple and so natural, struck Naaman, and he consented to obey. Seven times he plunged into the stream, and at the seventh time he rose purged of all malady and stain. His skin, before so much disfigured and broken by his frightful disease, became pure and soft as that of a new-born child. Then, full of joy and with gratitude proportioned to his previous disgust, he returned forthwith to Elisha. He now entered the house, and stood before the venerable man to tender his acknowledgments. His first word was admirable, it was a profession of faith. "Behold, now I know," he said, "that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel." His second was an expression of gratitude to the prophet, upon whom he pressed the rich presents he had brought. This the holy man refused, that the whole honour of this great act might be referred to its divine author. Naaman then, with sincere intentions, but not with very clear notions of the subject, begged that he might take home a mule's load of the soil that he might therewith make an altar in Damascus for his own devotions to the God of Israel, whom alone he was determined to adore. Yet it belonged to his rank to accompany his king to the great temple of Rimmon in Damascus, and for this he hoped pardon and allowance from God. With a full and happy heart the stranger then took leave of the prophet and departed towards his own home.

Elisha's servant Gehazi felt much annoyed that his master had let slip so rare an opportunity of enriching himself, and his cupidity was so strongly excited that he hastened after the retiring chariots to see what he could get in his master's name. He was no sooner observed, than the grateful Syrian stopped his chariots, and alighted to meet even the servant of the man to whom he owed so great a blessing. Gehazi stated that a sudden emergency had arisen to render desirable to his master a portion of what he had at first declined. Naaman made him take double what he asked: and when he had deposited his precious spoil—silver and dresses—in a place of safety, he repaired to his master. Elisha plainly taxed him with his offence, which he described as graphically as if the scene had passed before his eyes. "Went not my heart with thee," he said, "when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee?" and after pointing out the enormity of his sin, he pronounced the awful punishment, that the leprosy of which Naaman had been cured should adhere to him and his for ever. And he went forth from his presence a leper as white as snow.

SUNDAY XL.—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

IN their convictions on this subject they were confirmed by hearing that some of the disciples who had dispersed during the persecution, had ventured to preach the Lord Jesus to Gentiles as well as Jews at Antioch, and that their labours had been attended with the most signal success. Whether or not the disciples at Antioch had been encouraged to this step by having heard of the proceedings of Peter cannot be known; but the manifest blessing from heaven upon it, abundantly justified the disciples in the eyes of the church at Jerusalem, which forthwith despatched Barnabas to carry on the work which had been thus auspiciously commenced. That good man, on his arrival, was gladdened to witness the progress which the Gospel had made in the metropolis of the East, and employed his most ardent exertions to advance the work. The extensive prospect of efficient labour in the cause of Christ which was here opened, led him to invite Saul, who had been active among the Gentiles in Cilicia, to become his fellow-labourer. From this point in the history, the Hebrew name of Saul is exchanged for the corresponding one of Paul, a common Roman name, by which he had been known among his Gentile neighbours.

An evidence of the power with which the doctrine of Christ spread itself in an independent manner among the Gentiles, was the new name of CHRISTIANS, which was at Antioch first given to believers; among themselves they were called the Disciples of the Lord, the Brethren, the Believers. By the Jews names were imposed upon them which implied undervaluation or contempt, such as the Galileans, the Nazarenes, the Paupers, &c.; and they of course would not give them a name literally meaning the Adherents of the Messiah. The Gentiles had hitherto, on account of their observance of the ceremonial law, been unable to distinguish them from Jews. But now, when Christianity was spread among the Gentiles unconnected with the observance of the law, its professors appeared as an entirely new religious sect; and as the term "Christ" was held to be a proper name, the adherents of the new religion were distinguished by a word formed from it, as the adherents of any school of philosophy were wont to be named after its founder.

From that time forth Antioch occupied a most important place in the propagation of Christianity, for which there were now two central points; what Jerusalem had hitherto been for this purpose among the Jews, that Antioch now became among the Gentiles. As there grew up considerable intercourse between the two churches of Jerusalem and Antioch, Christian teachers frequently came from the former to the latter. Among these was a prophet named Agabus, who prophesied an approaching famine, which would be felt severely by a great number of the poor Christians in Jerusalem, and he called upon the believers at Antioch to assist their poorer brethren. This famine actually occurred in the year 44 A.D.

The church at Antioch cheerfully responded to this call, and sent their contributions, before the beginning of the famine, to Jerusalem by the hands of Paul and Barnabas.

The church at Jerusalem had enjoyed eight years of repose since the persecution which commenced with the martyrdom of Stephen, but was now assailed by a violent, though transitory tempest. King Herod Agrippa—a grandson of Herod the Great, who had been brought up at Rome—to whom the Emperor Claudius, in whose favour he stood high, had granted the government of Judea, deemed it prudent to affect great zeal for the strict observance of the ancient ritual, in order to ingratiate himself with his subjects. He therefore manifested great animosity against the teachers of the new doctrine, concerning whom, indeed, none but unfavourable reports had gained access to him. He caused James, the son of Zebedee, and brother to John, who probably by some act or discourse had excited the anger of the Jewish zealots, to be put to the sword: and finding that this act was highly pleasing to the Jews, he, during the passover of the year 44, cast Peter into prison, intending that after the feast he also should suffer death. Shut up in prison, in charge of four quaternions (or sixteen) soldiers, to two of whom he was fastened by chains, one on each side, and subject to the fell purposes of an unscrupulous tyrant—there seemed no human hope of escape for the apostle. But the church, which knew that all things were possible with God, despaired not, but offered up most fervent prayers on his behalf. And God, who had yet great services for this his servant to accomplish, heard their prayer. It was the night immediately preceding the day on which Herod intended to bring forth the apostle to his death, and Peter lay fast asleep between the two soldiers to whom he was chained, when he was smitten on the side, and a voice urged him to rise up quickly and go forth. As he arose, the chains fell from his hands; and hastily casting his garments about him, he followed the angel by whom he had been roused, and passing safely between the first and second guards, who were fixed in preternatural sleep, he reached the iron gate leading to the city. This opened of its own accord before the angel, who conducted him beyond the reach of immediate pursuit, and then departed from him.

Overcome by amazement, the apostle deemed all that passed a vision, and in the suddenness and rapidity with which it was done, he had no time for cool reflection. But when the angel had left him, he became alive to his real position, and hastened to the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose surname was Mark. Many of the disciples, knowing the danger that awaited him on the morrow, were at that moment, and in that house, engaged in prayer on his behalf. Having with some difficulty obtained admittance to them, he briefly reported to them all that had passed between him and the angel, and taking leave of them, withdrew to a place of greater safety.

The next morning there was no small stir in the palace of Herod and in the common prison; for the prisoner, so securely guarded, was nowhere to be found. Vexed and disappointed, the tyrant ordered the keepers to be slain, and then departed to Cæsarea: where, in the excess of his pride, he, on some public occasion, not only did not repel, but received with complacency the divine honours which were tendered to him. For this he was smitten of God with one of the most loathsome and terrible diseases with which the pride of man was ever humbled: "He was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."

It seems to have been in the midst of the trouble occasioned by the measures of Herod Agrippa, that Paul and Barnabas arrived at Jerusalem with the benefactions of the church at Antioch. It is probably for this reason that their stay was short, and that nothing of importance connected with their visit is recorded; although in the epistle to the Galatians (ch. ii.), Paul himself relates that he was well received by James, Peter, and John, who recognised him as an apostle specially appointed to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, as they were, they believed, "to the circumcision," or to the seed of Abraham. Paul himself knew that he was not inferior in authority and power "to the very chiefest of the apostles:" and this claim was now recognised by those who seemed to be regarded at Jerusalem as "the pillars of the church." On their departure, Paul and Barnabas took with them the above-named John, surnamed Mark, who was the nephew of Barnabas, and who is usually supposed to be the same with the Evangelist Mark, but this is not certain.

They first proceeded to Antioch, and were there soon joined by Peter, who appears to have proceeded thither after his deliverance (Gal. ii. 11). Peter at first freely associated himself, even in the eating of food, with the Gentile converts; but when some came from Jerusalem who alleged that James had expressed an opinion unfavourable to this course, he ceased to do so. Many other Jewish Christians, and even Barnabas, were carried away by this example; and a marked line would thus have been drawn between the Jewish and Gentile converts, had not Paul interposed and publicly rebuked Peter, in the presence of the congregation, for the painful inconsistency and discouraging effect of his proceedings.

They first repaired to Cyprus, to which Barnabas belonged, and traversed the island from east to west, from Salamis to Paphos. In the latter place they found the proconsul, Sergius Paulus—a man dissatisfied with all that the popular religion and all that philosophy could offer for his religious wants, and anxious to avail himself of anything that might offer in the shape of a communication from heaven. In this frame of mind he had given ear to a Jewish impostor, Bar-Jesus, but better known by his foreign title of *Elymas*, which means the same as Magian, or "wise man." Feeling that his influence and personal interests were in danger, this man vehemently opposed Paul and Barnabas in the presence of the proconsul. But Paul, being filled with holy indignation, declared that the Lord would punish him with the loss of his eyesight. The sentence was immediately fulfilled, the darkness of night came upon him, and he went about seeking some one to lead him by the hand.



1006.—Elymas struck with Blindness.
Taro Elymas â Dallineb.



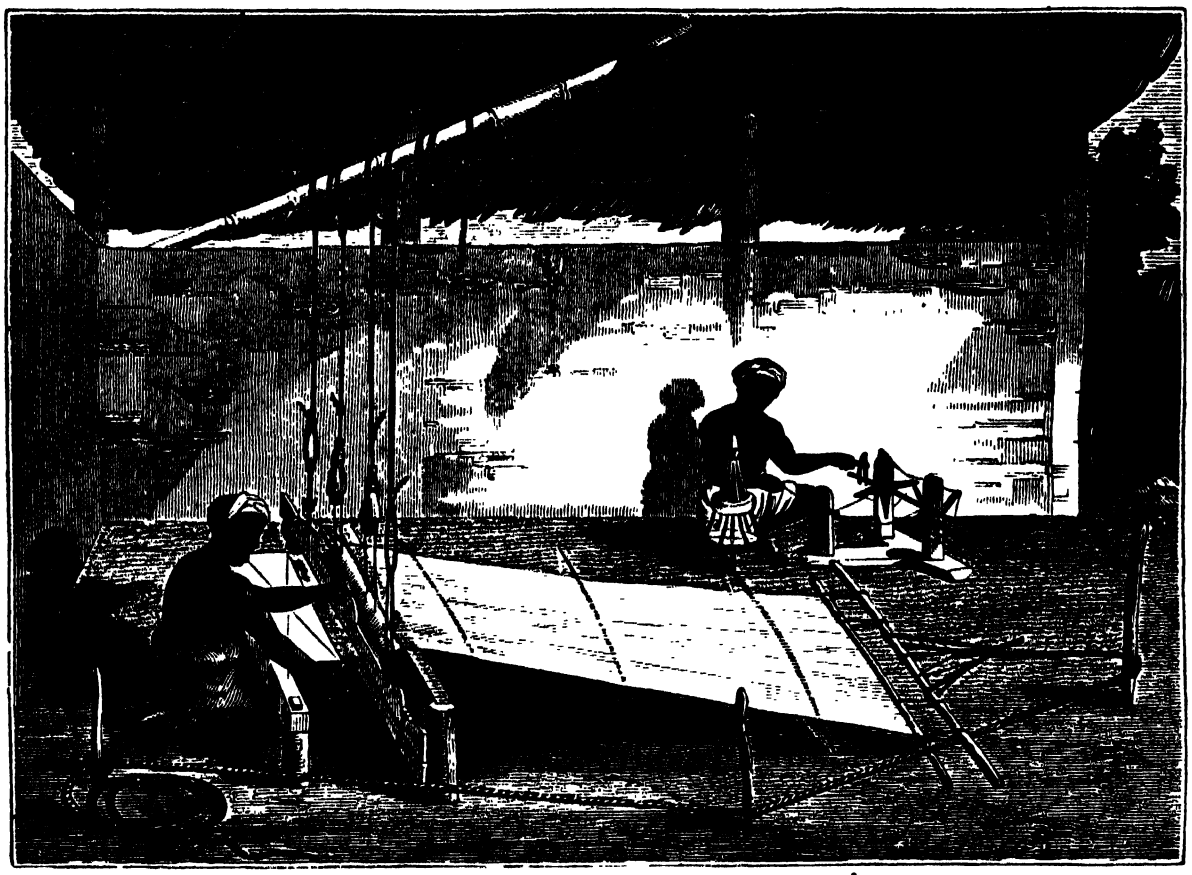
1007.—The Sacrifice at Lystra.
Yr Aberth yn Lystra.



1008.—Caravan.
Taith-fintai.



1010.—Torrent.
Llifeiriant.



1012.—Modern Oriental Weaving.
Gwehyddiaeth Ddwyreiniol Diweddar.



1009.—Halt on a Journey.
Gorphwysiad ar Daith.



1011.—Winter Torrent.
Llifeiriant Gauafol.

SUNDAY XLI.—JOB.



UCH was Job hurt at the harsh censures and insinuations of Eliphaz, to which he replied, justifying the boldness of his complaints by urging the greatness of the afflictions which extorted them from him. He complained feelingly of the unkindness of his friends in regarding him as guilty because he was miserable, and in coming to him with reproaches instead of sympathies and consolations. He implored them to treat him with fairness; to examine his case, and not to condemn him on account of his miserable condition. He then proceeded to expatiate on the miseries and shortness of human life, from which he returned to his own melancholy state, and ventured once more to expostulate with God upon the greatness of his afflictions and their long continuance.

This reply occupies the sixth and seventh chapters, from which a few points may be selected for particular remark.

One of the most striking passages in the whole book is that in which Job describes the delusive expectation of water created in caravans by the appearance of a river-bed, which proves, when they come near it, to be dry:—

> "But my brethern were faithless like a brook;
> They pass away like streams of the valley,
> Which are turbid by reason of the melted ice,
> And the snow which hides itself in them.
> After a time they become narrow, they vanish,
> And when the heat cometh they are dried up from their place.
> The caravans turn aside to them in their way;
> They go up into the desert and perish.
> The caravans of Tema look for them;
> The companies of Sheba expect to see them:
> They are ashamed that they have relied upon them;
> They come to their place, and are confounded."
> (Job vi. 15—20.)

The idea conveyed in the first line is a strict Orientalism: "My brethren have acted (or played) the flood with me" is as common a proverb now among the Arabians as it could be when the poem was composed. Dr. Good cites the scholiast on the Moallakat, to this effect:—"A pool or flood was called *gadyr*, because travellers when they pass by it find it full of water; but on their return find nothing at all there, and regard it as having acted treacherously towards them."

There are few perennial streams in Western Asia, and perhaps none in Arabia: most of those streams which figure in the maps are merely the beds of winter-torrents. These temporary streams are first formed by the autumnal rains; they are kept up by the occasional rains of winter, and in spring are increased by the rains of that season and by the melting of the snows in the mountains. They rush down the valleys in a large body of turbid water, and assume the appearance of deep rivers. Their increase, and still more their decrease, is often sudden and rapid, beyond any thing of which we can in this country form a conception; and in summer they become perfectly dry. It will from this be seen that the description is not only exceedingly beautiful, but is a description of a scene of nature in the country where the residence of Job is placed. But its principal beauty lies in the exact correspondence of all its parts to the thing it is intended to represent. The fulness, strength, and noise of these temporary streams in early spring, answer to the large professions made to Job in his prosperity by his friends. The drying up of the waters at the approach of summer, resembles the failure of their friendship in his affliction; and the confusion of the thirsty caravans in finding the streams vanished, strongly illustrates his feelings, disappointed as he was of the relief he expected in these men's friendly counsel.

In Mr. Hope's 'Anastasius,' a severe disappointment is illustrated by a very similar comparison:—"Once in my homeward journey from the eternal desert—oppressed with heat, and in vain soliciting my cruse for a drop of water to wet my parched lips,—I had, when at the point of fainting from exhaustion, beheld in a valley before me the semblance of a limpid lake, ready to slake my raging thirst, and to lave my wearied limbs—had collected my last strength to reach its winding banks, and when near the delusive spot had found the vision a mere mockery, and nothing real around me save sands more dry and burning than those I had left behind. But what was this disappointment to my sense, even with life at stake, compared with that which struck my mind at this most dreadful moment."

In the passage in which Job describes his miserable condition, he says—

> "My flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dirt;
> My skin heals and breaks out anew;" (vii. 5.)

which confirms the impression already exhibited, that his disease was a species of leprosy. Maundrell, in describing the lepers he saw in Nablous, the ancient Shechem, draws a picture in entire conformity with Job's description:—

"The distemper, as I saw it, was very different from what I have seen it in England, for it not only defiles the whole outer surface of the body with a foul scurf, but also deforms the joints of the body, particularly those of the wrists and ancles, making them swell with a gouty scrofulous substance, very loathsome to look upon. I thought their legs resembled those of old battered horses, such as are often seen in drays in England."

In the immediately following verse Job describes by a striking comparison the fragility of human life:—

> "My days are slighter than the weaver's yarn;
> They are finished like the breaking of a thread."

The first line is usually translated with reference to the swiftness of a weaver's *shuttle*, but the one now given is perhaps more correct, and the swiftness of the weaver's shuttle perhaps conveys a less pertinent idea than the slightness, or tenuity, and consequent brittleness of the yarn with which it is armed. In this view there is the same image in the eloquent complaint of Hezekiah:—

> "My life is cut off as by the weaver,
> He will sever me from the loom;
> Within a day and a night thou wilt finish my web."
> (Isa. xxxviii. 12.)

Most commentators suppose that the fine allegory of the thread of life being previously woven by the Fates, and tissued for every individual, was coeval with the author of the present poem, and is alluded to in the present passage. That allegory has all the marks of an Oriental origin; and similes of the kind are still frequent among the Oriental poets and historians. Thus in the opening of the history of Timour, "Praise be to God! who hath woven the web of human affairs in the web of his will and of his wisdom, and hath made the waves of times and of seasons flow from the fountain of his providence into the ocean of his power." The present text will remind many readers of the fine passage in 'Lycidas:'—

> "Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
> (That last infirmity of noble minds)
> To scorn delights and live laborious days:
> But the fair guerdon, when we hope to find,
> And think to burst forth into sudden blaze,
> Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears,
> *And slits the thin-spun life.*"

It will not escape notice that Job, in describing the thread of his life as being spun out with great rapidity and tenuity, and about to be cut off, affords an interesting, although incidental, illustration of early weaving. Many persons have doubted whether the shuttle was of so early a date as the era of Job; and this may be another reason for the translation we have preferred. The Egyptians do not appear to have had a shuttle, but to have put in the thread by means of a rod with a hook at either end. If the shuttle was not in use among a people so advanced in the manufacture of cloth as the Egyptians, it seems but little likely that it should be known to the people among whom Job lived, or to the author of the book which bears his name. It may be added, that in the state of society which the book appears to describe, all clothes for ordinary use are spun and woven at home, which renders every one familiar with the process. This is distinctly intimated by Job himself:—

> "If I have seen any wretched one without clothing,
> Or any poor man without covering;
> If his loins have not blessed me,
> And he have not been warmed with the fleece of my flock,
> Then," &c. (xxxi. 19, 20.)

And so in the vivid description of a good housewife which occupies the last chapter of the book of Proverbs:—

> "She layeth her hands to the spindle,
> And her hands hold the distaff." (Prov. xxxi. 19.)

SUNDAY XLI.—BIBLE HISTORY.



THE kingdoms of Israel and Syria were soon again at war with each other. In the first campaign the Syrians were unsuccessful, as all their plans and operations were known to the prophet, and were communicated by him to the king of Israel. Benhadad suspected there was a traitor in his camp; but his officers assured him that it was the doing of Elisha, who, said they, "telleth the king of Israel the words thou speakest in thy bed-chamber." On this the Syrian prince resolved to put him to death; and with this view he sent by night a body of his best troops to invest Dothan, the place where the prophet then dwelt, in such a manner that he could not possibly escape. Indeed the servant of Elisha himself deemed all lost when, at the break of day, he beheld the surrounding country covered with Syrian horsemen and chariots. "Fear not," said the prophet, "for there be more with us than with them;" and he opened his eyes to behold the air more abundantly filled with angelic hosts, assembled in defence of Jehovah's servant, than was the land with the invading Syrians. Then, at the prayer of the prophet, God smote the Syrians with blindness; and in that state he conducted them to the gates of Samaria, where he gave them leave to depart, after warning them that they were entirely at his mercy.

But this lenity made no impression upon the heart of Benhadad, who resolved to prosecute the war with the utmost vigour. He laid siege to the capital, which was soon reduced to the utmost distress, so that the inhabitants were obliged to have recourse to the most unwholesome and unnatural food. So dreadful were the extremities of famine, that several women, deaf to all cries of natural affection, and even to the common feelings of humanity, fed upon the flesh of their own children. When the king heard this in public, he rent his royal robes, and the people saw that under his magnificence he wore the sackcloth of a mourner upon his skin. Rendered frantic by the miseries that saluted his eye and ear on every side, he gave orders to lay hands upon Elisha, whom he now accused as the author of all the miseries which the nation endured. He commanded an officer to go to his house and take off his head, while he himself followed, apparently to ensure the execution, or to enjoy the sight of a punishment which he deemed so well deserved. Some, however, suppose that he had changed his mind, and followed to recall the orders he had given. But ere the messenger of death appeared, Elisha, who was sitting among his disciples, said to them, "See how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head! Look; and when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door: is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?"

This was done; and when the king himself arrived, he did not enforce his order, but forbore not to give vent to the doubt and unbelief which distracted his heart:—"Why should I wait for Jehovah any longer?" implying that the Lord was unwilling or unable to deliver him from this great distress. At that moment the prophet announced to him, in the name of God, that before twenty-four hours had passed, food, which was at that moment unattainable at any price, should be sold for next to nothing in the gate of Samaria. A lord on whose arm the king leaned, said, unbelievingly, "Even if the Lord should open windows in heaven, can this thing be?" Elisha sternly answered, "Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof."

Next morning the prediction was fulfilled; for during the night the Syrians had been struck with a supernatural panic, deserted their camp, and fled in the utmost confusion, leaving behind them an immense quantity of provisions. Strange sounds in the air seemed to indicate the approach of a mighty army, consisting of cavalry and charioteers; and concluding that the Egyptians or some of the bordering nations had been induced to undertake the relief of Samaria, they gave way to the most fearful apprehensions, and before the dawn of day could undeceive them, were far on their way home, leaving the road strewed with their spoils.

Jehoram, suspecting that the retreat was a mere stratagem meant to draw the Israelites beyond the walls, hesitated to commence the pursuit. A small body of horsemen was in the first instance dispatched to ascertain that no ambush had been formed in the distance by the Syrians. But instead of enemies lying in wait, the scouts found the ground covered with weapons and stores which the fugitives had cast from them in the hurry of their flight, besides other tokens of the consternation with which all ranks among them had been seized. No sooner was this intelligence made known in the city, than the eager and famishing multitude rushed forth to pillage the camp of the Syrians, where victuals were found in such abundance, that a market was established at the gate of Samaria, where, as the prophet had on the previous day predicted, a sack of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two sacks of barley for the same. The lord who had refused to believe the prophecy of Elisha, was stationed to preserve order at the gate: but so great was the press of the multitude to obtain corn, that he was thrown down and trodden to death.

The spoiled camp of the Syrians furnished not only an abundance of corn, but a large quantity of silver and gold, with all kinds of cattle. Plenty then succeeded in Samaria to want, and joy took the place of fear and sorrow; and as the people, triumphing in their easy victory, arrayed themselves in the spoils of the Syrians, they received and for a time cherished the conviction that their own Jehovah was mightier than the gods of their enemies. The Syrian king himself seems to have arrived at a similar conviction—that it was a divine power, and not man, who had occasioned his overthrow; and Josephus considers that it was this conviction—the idea that he was an object of displeasure and vengeance to a God so mighty—that preyed upon his spirits, and cast him into a profound melancholy, and at length upon a sick bed. In this frame of mind and body he heard that Elisha, the celebrated prophet of Israel, had come to Damascus; whereupon he gave orders to his most trusted servant Hazael, that he should wait upon him, with all due reverence and suitable presents, to inquire the issue of this distemper. Hazael caused forty camels to be laden with the choice things of Damascus, and went to the man of God, to whom he said, "Thy son Benhadad, king of Syria, hath sent me to thee, saying, 'Shall I recover of this disease?'" The reply of Elisha was very enigmatical: "Go, say unto him, 'Thou mayest certainly recover!'" "Howbeit," he added, "the Lord hath shown me that he shall surely die." This had reference to the designs which he knew that the man before him entertained against the life of his master, in case he should learn that the disease itself was not likely to be mortal. The prophet, as he said this, looked stedfastly in the Syrian's face, as one who would read his heart, or rather to whom its darkest recesses were open. Then, anticipating the evils which his own country would in future time suffer from this unprincipled usurper, the holy man burst into tears. Relieved by this from the confusion which the prophet's steady gaze had occasioned, Hazael ventured to ask the cause of his emotion. "Because I know," replied the prophet, "the evil *thou* shalt do unto the children of Israel;" and he proceeded to draw a vivid picture of ferocious cruelty and wanton devastation, the mere imagination of which shook even the firm nerves of Hazael. "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do such things?" he indignantly exclaimed to the prophet, who had thought proper to lift up a corner of that thick veil which hid the future from his sight. "The Lord hath shown me that thou shalt be king over Syria," was the quiet answer of the prophet: and it left nothing unexplained.

In due time all that the man of God had foretold came to pass. Hazael returned to the palace, and delivered to Benhadad the favourable opinion of his case which the prophet had expressed: but, "behold, on the morrow he took a thick cloth, and dipped it in water, and spread it on his face, so that he died." This seems to mean that he murdered him in such a manner as to give to his demise the appearance of a natural death from disease. The murderer, well and favourably known to the Syrians for his great talents and eminent services, then ascended without opposition the throne he had rendered vacant.

The character and abilities of the new king were not understood by the king of Israel; and he was hence led to suppose the opportunity favourable for making another attempt to recover Ramoth-Gilead from the hands of the Syrians. A battle ensued, in which King Jehoram was wounded, and was obliged to retire to Jezreel to be healed of his wounds, leaving the army under the command of Jehu, the son of Nimshi, who had long before been named to the prophet Elijah as the instrument of the divine vengeance upon the house of Ahab. Ramoth had already fallen to the Israelites, and their army seems to have been in possession of its fortresses, when one of the "sons of the prophets," commissioned by Elisha, made his appearance among the officers, and asked an interview with their leader. "I have an errand unto thee, O captain," he said. "To which of us?" asked Jehu. "Even to thee," was the answer: and he arose and went forth with the stranger. On his return, his altered manner attracted the notice of the generals, and



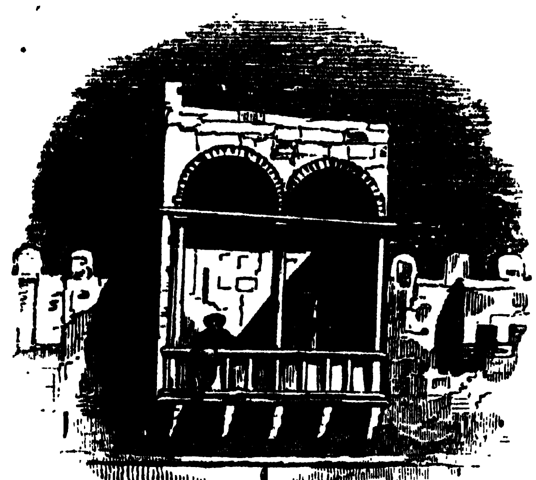
1013.—Elisha. (Phil. de Champagne.)
Eliseus.



1014.—Application to a Santon.
Appeliad at Santon.



1015.—Oriental Ewer and Basin.
Dwfr-lestr a Chawg Dwyreiniol.



1016.—Chamber on the Wall, near Alexandria.
Ystafell ar y Mur, yn agos i Alexandria.



1017.—Syrian Bear (Ursus Syriacus.)
Arth Syriaidd.



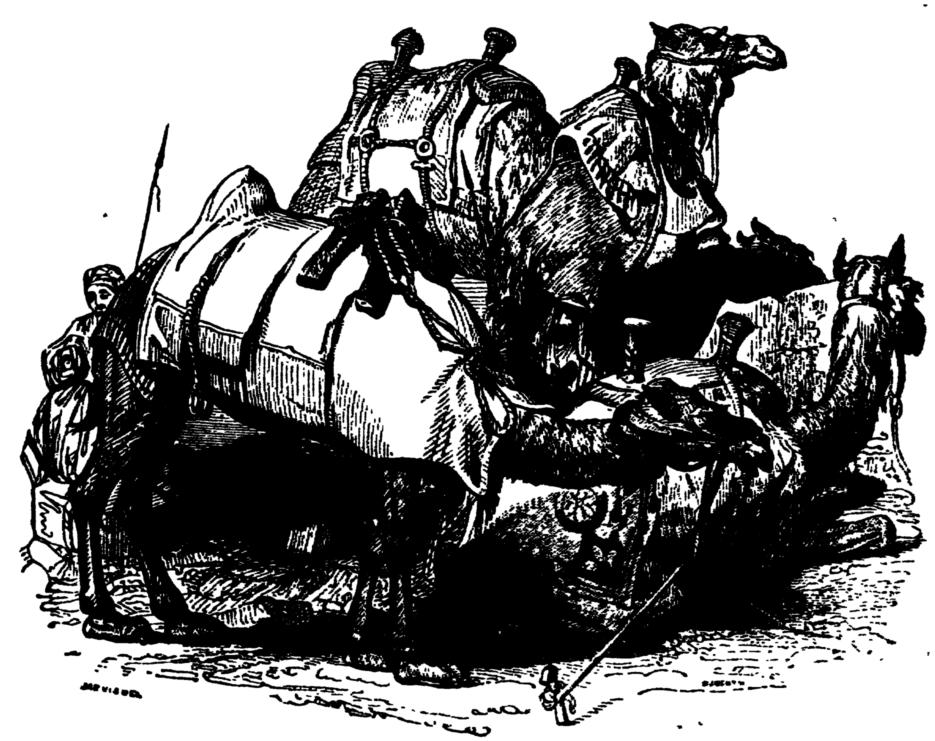
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1020.—Loaded Camels.
Camelod Llwythog



1021.—Camels.



1022.—The Shunamitish Woman pleading for her Lands. (Girodet.)
Y Wraig o Sunem yn gwaeddi am ei Thir.



1023.—Death of Jehoram. (Adapted from Poussin.)

they asked him what had happened: he replied, that the stranger, known by his garb to be a prophet, had anointed him king over Israel in the name of Jehovah. The soldiers, discontented and ripe for revolt, and attached to their valiant leader, hailed the tidings with shouts of joy; and hastened to acknowledge the new sovereign. Piling their garments in a heap, agreeably to the practice of Eastern nations, as a throne for him to sit on, the officers ordered the trumpets to sound, and proclaimed Jehu king.

At the desire of Jehu, measures were taken to prevent the news of this revolution from being carried across the Jordan for the present; in consequence of which, King Jehoram remained in perfect repose at Jezreel, unsuspicious of what had happened, and enjoying the society of Ahaziah, king of Judah, who had come to Jezreel to visit his wounded relative. But one day the watchman upon his tower over the palace gate announced that a party of armed horsemen were approaching at a rapid pace. The king gave orders to ascertain the cause of this unexpected movement: but one messenger after another, instead of returning with an explanation, joined the advancing horsemen, till, at length, they came so near that the watcher could distinguish that the furiously driving charioteer at the head of the advancing party was no other than Jehu the son of Nimshi. On hearing this, the king, impatient to ascertain the cause which brought the commander of his forces in such haste to Jezreel, mounted his chariot, and drove forth to meet him, accompanied by Ahaziah in another chariot. They met: and the eyes of the devoted king were too soon opened, for in answer to the inquiry, "Is there peace?" Jehu proceeded in a high voice to charge him with the crimes of his father's house, and with the atrocities of which his mother had been guilty. On hearing this, the unhappy king exclaimed to his companion, "There is treachery, O Ahaziah!" and turned his chariot, with the apparent intention of escaping to Jezreel, and shutting his gates against the usurper. But Jehu discharged after him an arrow, which smote him to the heart. "Let his body," said Jehu to Bidkar, his captain, "be cast into the field of Naboth the Jezreelite: for remember how that when thou and I rode together after Ahab his father, the Lord laid this burden upon him."

The other king was wounded mortally in an attempt to escape "by way of the garden house." He, however, made his way to Megiddo, where he died of his wounds, and his body was taken by his servants to Jerusalem, B.C. 884.

Jehu then proceeded to the city, where no one remained to oppose his entrance; and in his way under the palace walls, or through its courts, an opportunity occurred for his ridding himself of Jezebel, the mother of the late king, whose bold and ruthless character, independent of the influence which she possessed at the court of Jerusalem, might have tended to render the new government insecure. She had heard of the bloody tragedy which had just been perpetrated outside the town; and in haste she coloured her eyelids (an essential part of Eastern female toilet), and arrayed in vestures suited to her station her aged but not venerable head. Thus prepared for making an impression, she appeared at the window as Jehu passed, and called out, "Had Zimri peace, who slew his master?"—which question, by conveying a very appropriate allusion to a similar event of former years, reproached him for the murder of his sovereign, and warned him of a day of retribution. But Jehu was not a man to be shaken in this manner. He knew, or guessed, which she did not, that the disaffection, which had its first outbreak at Ramoth-Gilead, existed also in the palaces of Jezreel. Jehu only answered this woman's taunt by calling out—"Who is on my side—who?" when two eunuchs of the harem appeared at the window. "Throw her down," cried Jehu, in the voice of a master; and he was instantly obeyed. She was stunned or killed by the fall; and as she lay motionless, she was trampled under foot by the horses, and crushed beneath the chariot-wheels.

Jehu then entered the palace, and sat down to refresh himself after his bloody work. As he was at meat he called to mind that Jezebel was a king's daughter, and therefore directed that her remains should be buried without disrespect. But those who went forth to discharge this duty found that of the proud queen of Israel nothing but the skull, the palms of the hands, and the soles of the feet remained, the dogs having devoured all the other parts of the body. When this was told to Jehu, he recognised in it the fulfilment of Elijah's prophecy, that dogs should eat Jezebel beneath the wall of Jezreel. That the dogs refused the skull, hands, and feet, has seemed to many a strange circumstance. In Europe we have happily no means of verifying such facts from our own experience; but several anecdotes which have of late years reached us from the East, show that this is an occasional, if not general, practice among the street-dogs of the East.

Jehu was one of those selfish and pitiless men of blood whom God sometimes deems fit to use as his instruments for the correction and punishment of a guilty nation. Let not the fact that Jehu was intrusted with a commission against the house of Ahab, hide from us the truly odious and bloodthirsty character of this man. It was not with concern or sorrow of heart that he smote down those, so lately his princes and lords, whom he was commissioned to destroy; but with fiendish delight, with a selfish satisfaction that his own interests were promoted by these executions, and with that rabid thirst for blood, which grows by what it feeds on, and forms one of those dark mysteries of the human spirit which has had other examples, and from the investigation of which the pure mind shrinks with awe and dread. Jehu executed righteous judgment in an unrighteous manner, using the holy name of God to cover his own base ends and his bloodthirstiness, with the pretext of a religious motive.

His fearful work was not yet completed; it had only just begun. He was resolved to exterminate the whole house of Ahab, from the root to the uttermost branches; for the descendants of that house were numerous, and might prove troublesome to him. He therefore wrote to the elders of Samaria, under whose protection the princes of that house remained, to select the one who was the fittest for government, and place him on his father's throne, and prepare themselves to defend his rights. Although this letter was studiously ambiguous, it could not fail to be understood by those who were acquainted with the character of the man; and although Samaria was well fortified and supplied with provisions, the elders trembled, and resolved to give up their trust, and submit themselves to the will of the conqueror. On receiving an answer to this effect, Jehu required as a test of their sincerity, that they should appear before him the following day with the heads of all the princes—seventy in number—of the house of Ahab. The bloody order was punctually obeyed. The princes were at once decapitated, and their heads sent over in baskets to Jezreel; and when the exterminator left the palace the next morning, he beheld them piled up in two heaps at the gate. Jehu perceived that the grim satisfaction with which he contemplated this horrid spectacle was not shared by the people; and he addressed them in a few emphatic but ambiguous words, in which he seems to have intended to shift the responsibility of this massacre from his own shoulders, while, at the same time, he indirectly justified the deed by referring it to the inscrutable designs of Providence, whose denunciations against sin failed not of their accomplishment in due season, however long delayed.

He then proceeded, on the fresh impulse thus received from Samaria, to renew the havoc in Jezreel, where there were still many adherents of the fallen house, connected with it by blood or by high employments. These were hunted out and slain without mercy. Having finished his work of blood in Jezreel, Jehu proceeded to the capital, and on the way met a large body of noble travellers, forty-two in number, who had heard nothing of the revolution in Israel. They belonged to the royal family of Judah, and, after the example of their king, were going down to visit the princes of Israel. Jehu directed his officers to take them alive, and slay them at the shearing-pit by the way side;—and this was done. Not one escaped. After this horrid massacre, which more than anything else evinces the disposition of Jehu to make his commission an excuse and cover for the promptings of his own sanguinary spirit, he pursued his journey to Samaria. On his way he met with Jonadab the son of Rechab, the founder or reformer of a sect answering in some respects to the Wahabees of modern times, and celebrated for their abstinence from wine. This man, like all persons in the East who have succeeded in establishing a claim for superior holiness, was regarded with great respect by the people; and Jehu, alive to this consideration, and aware of the authority which his acts would derive from such a sanction, invited the Bedouin chief to accompany him, and witness his "zeal for Jehovah." Jonadab accordingly ascended Jehu's chariot, and sanctioned by his presence the further and more extensive massacre which the king had in view—of all the more zealous worshippers of Baal. He laid a trap for them, which no circumstances can excuse. He pretended to be a convert to their worship. "Ahab served Baal a little," he said, "but Jehu shall serve him much;" and he accordingly proclaimed a solemn festival, to which he invited all the priests and worshippers of the Sidonian idol, and indeed urged their attendance under heavy penalties. Proud of their illustrious convert, the priests and prophets of Baal thronged from all parts of the land to Samaria, till they completely filled the large and magnificent temple which had, in the time of Ahab, been erected in Samaria to their idol.

SUNDAY XLI.—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

PAUL and his companions, on quitting Cyprus, passed over to Pamphylia in Asia Minor, and proceeding along the borders of Phrygia, Isauria, and Pisidia, made some stay at the considerable city of Antioch, distinguished as Antioch in Pisidia. On the first Sabbath-day after their arrival in this place they repaired to the synagogue, and after the reading of the law, they were asked by the rulers of the synagogue if they would address the people. Paul gladly accepted the call, and his address, which is given in Acts xiii. 16—42, is an admirable specimen of the wonderful power which this extraordinary man possessed of adapting his discourse to the audience he addressed, as well as of his peculiar antithetical mode of developing Christian truth. Uttered as it was with all the impressiveness of firm conviction, and yet evincing great tenderness towards the Jews, it made at first a favourable impression upon the audience; and he was requested to expound the same doctrine more fully on the next Sabbath.

This was the general feeling; but there were among them some, especially those who had been converted from Paganism to the Jewish religion, who were more deeply affected than the rest by the power of truth. These could not wait till the next Sabbath, but hastened after Paul, who had left the synagogue with Barnabas, and besought more ample instruction. Paul and Barnabas gladly availed themselves of this opening, and employed themselves during the week in explaining the doctrine of Christ in private houses, and likewise in making it known to the Gentiles. Hence, by the next Sabbath, the new doctrine had acquired notoriety throughout the city, and a great number of Gentiles flocked to the synagogue along with the Jews to hear Paul's discourse. But the temper of the Jewish audience had changed. Their spiritual pride was shocked to perceive that the redemption which Paul preached was not to be regarded as the peculiar property of the seed of Abraham, but was freely offered, "without money and without price," to the Gentiles also. He was therefore interrupted by violent contradictions and reproaches; on which he at length plainly told them that he had discharged the obligation he was under of declaring to them the mercy of God in Christ, and that, since they rejected it, to their own condemnation, he would now turn to the Gentiles, who were more disposed to receive it, and were equally with them entitled to its benefits. Paul and Barnabas then left the synagogue, followed by the Gentile believers; and a suitable chamber in the house of one of them was probably the first place of assembly for the congregation which was now formed. Christianity then spread with great rapidity through the city and the surrounding district. But the Jews were meanwhile not idle; they contrived, by means of the female proselytes to Judaism, belonging to the most respectable families of the city, and through their influence on their husbands, to raise so strong a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, that they were obliged to leave the place.

They repaired to a city about ten miles to the east, in Lycaonia, called Iconium (now Konieh), where they had access to both Jews and Gentiles. The former, however, here proved quite as hostile as at Antioch, so that they were soon driven from this city also. They then repaired to other cities in the same province, and first tarried in the neighbouring town of Lystra. Here there were few Jews and no synagogue; so that Paul and Barnabas could make known the Gospel only by entering into conversation, in places of public resort, and thus leading persons to listen to their discourse on religious subjects: gradually small groups were formed, which were increased by many persons, who were attracted by curiosity to enter into the subject of conversation. One day, while Paul was thus occupied, he noticed a poor cripple, who had never walked, looking steadfastly on him, and drinking in with eager attention the precious words which fell from his inspired lips. The apostle called to him with a loud voice, "Stand upright on thy feet;" and he stood up and walked. This miracle, parallel to that which Peter and John had performed at the beautiful gate of the temple in Jerusalem, attracted here at least equal attention with that which the earlier had done in the holy city. The sight drew together a vast crowd, and the credulous multitude took up the notion that the Gods had come down to them in the likeness of men. Now in this city, Zeus, or Jupiter, was worshipped as the tutelary god, and a temple dedicated to him stood near the gate. Accordingly the people supposed that their own tutelary god Jupiter had come down to them, and they identified him with Barnabas, probably from his grave manner and noble presence, while the eloquent and active Paul they took to be Hermes, or Mercury. The news of the appearance of these supposed divinities soon reached the temple, and the priests hastened with oxen and with garlands to adorn them, and purposed to offer sacrifice to the descended gods for the welfare of the city. Paul and Barnabas were filled with consternation as soon as they discovered this design. They rent their clothes, and rushed among the crowd exclaiming, "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you, that ye should turn from these vanities to the living God." Even by this assurance they scarcely prevailed upon them to desist from their purpose. Yet the impression which had been made, strong as it was, had no duration, being made rather upon the senses than the heart; and when, soon after, some Jews came to Lystra from Iconium, they found little difficulty in instigating a large body of the people against Paul, whom they had lately been ready to worship. He was stoned in a popular tumult, and dragged out of the city for dead. But it seems that he had only been rendered insensible by one or more of the blows he had received; and while the believers stood around him, he arose strengthened by the power of God, and returned with them to the city. He remained only for the rest of that day, and departed the next morning to the neighbouring city of Derbe, with Barnabas. When they had for a time laboured in that city, they had the Christian courage to return to the towns from which they had been driven by stonings and persecutions; the welfare of the infant churches being of far more consequence to them than their own safety. After this they returned by their former route to Antioch in Syria.

They remained "a long time" at Antioch. In fact there is a period, variously computed from five to eight years, during which no account of their movements is given by the sacred historian, and which would at first view seem to measure the period of their stay at Antioch. It is certain, however, that Paul made several journeys, of which we have no particular account in the New Testament, and it is possible that some of these journeys occurred during this interval. Thus he preached the Gospel as far as Illyricum (Rom. xv. 19); and in 2 Cor. xi. 22—27, there is an account of trials and persecutions, of many of which we have no distinct record, and which might have occurred during this period.

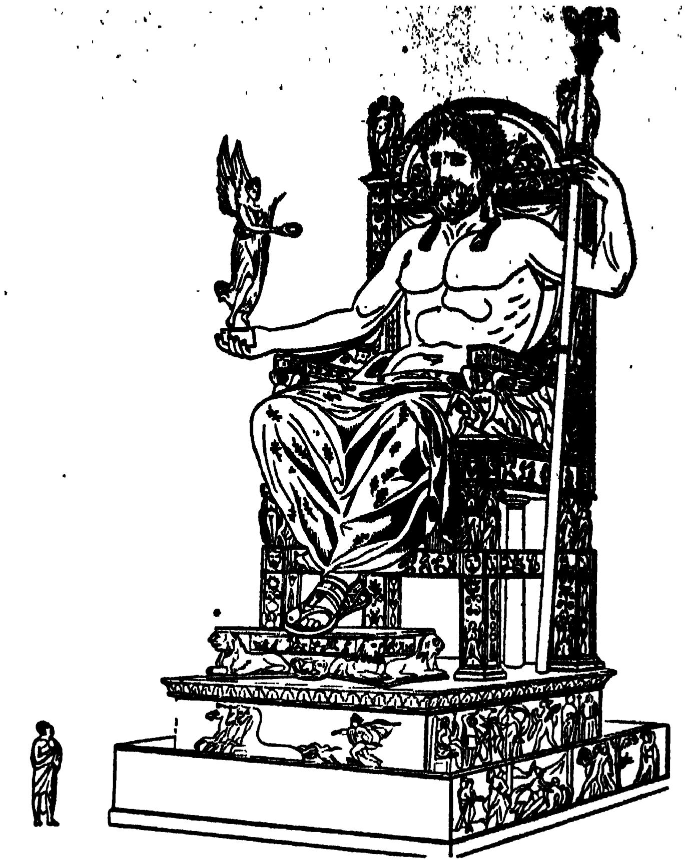
While in this manner Christianity spread itself from Antioch, the parent church of the Gentile world, a schism gradually arose between it and the other parent church at Jerusalem, by which the cause of the Gospel seemed at first to be placed in great peril.

There came to Antioch many strictly pharisaical-minded converts from Jerusalem, who took upon them to assure the Gentile converts that without circumcision they could obtain no part in the kingdom of God. These persons reproved Paul and Barnabas for their lax and unauthorised proceedings, in dispensing with the observances of the old covenant, and they raised so much dissension and controversy, that it was at length determined that Paul and Barnabas, accompanied by certain leading men in the church at Antioch, should proceed to Jerusalem, and confer with the other apostle in this great matter. The proposal of such a deputation probably originated with Paul himself; for he informs us, in the Epistle to the Galatians, that he knew, from divine revelation, that an explanation on the subject had become essential to the well-being of the church. He took with him a converted youth of Gentile descent, named Titus, who afterwards became his chief associate in preaching, in order to exhibit in his person a living example of the power of the Gospel among the heathen.

Before a public consultation was held at Jerusalem, there were many private conferences among the apostles. The most important result was, that after Paul had given a full account to the apostles James, Peter, and John, of his course in publishing the Gospel among the heathen, and of the fruit of his labours among them, they acknowledged fully and unreservedly the divine origin of his apostleship, instead of presuming to dictate to him as superiors. They agreed that he should continue to labour independently among the Gentiles, making only one stipulation, that the Gentile churches should continue to relieve out of their abundance the temporal wants of the poor brethren at Jerusalem. "The same which I also was forward to do," says Paul, in giving his account of these transactions (Gal. ii. 10).



1027.—Cerini, in Cyprus.
Cerini, yn Cyprus.



1024.—Jupiter Olympus.



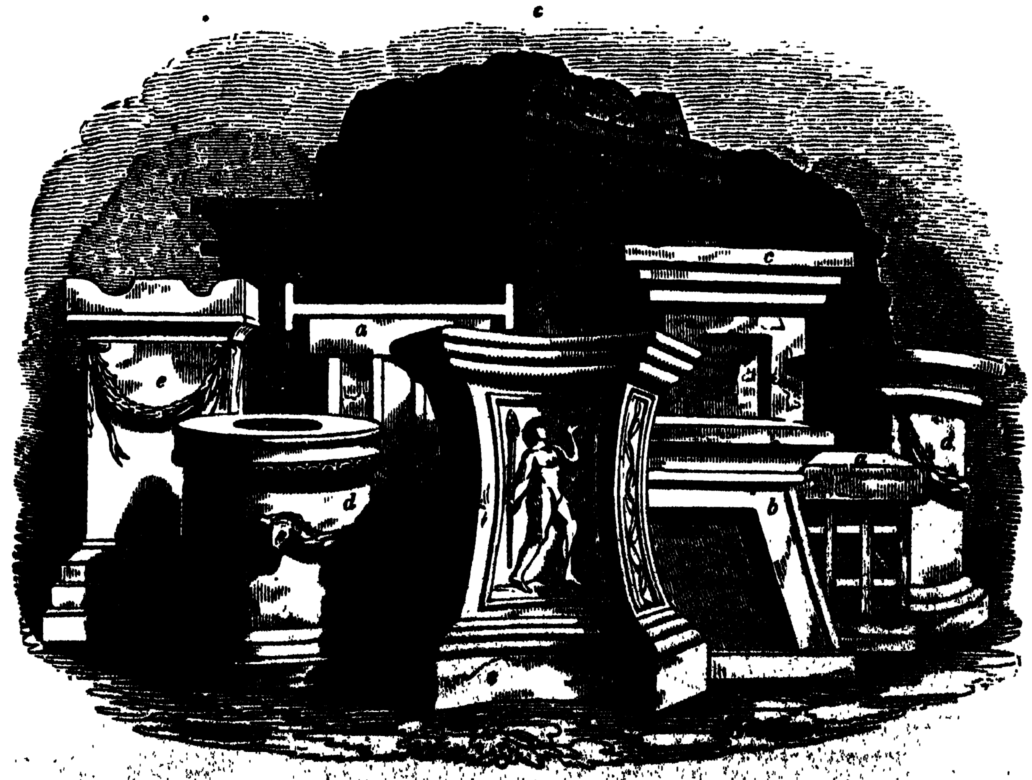
1026.—Famagusta, in Cyprus.
Ffamagusta, yn Cyprus.



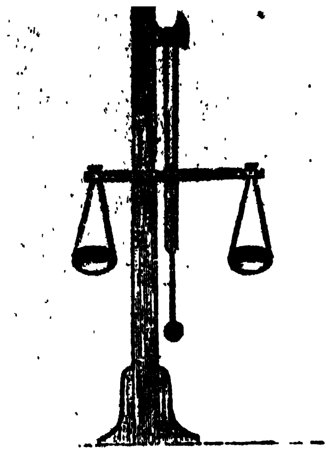
1028.—Present appearance of Famagusta.
Ymddangosiad presennol Ffamagusta.



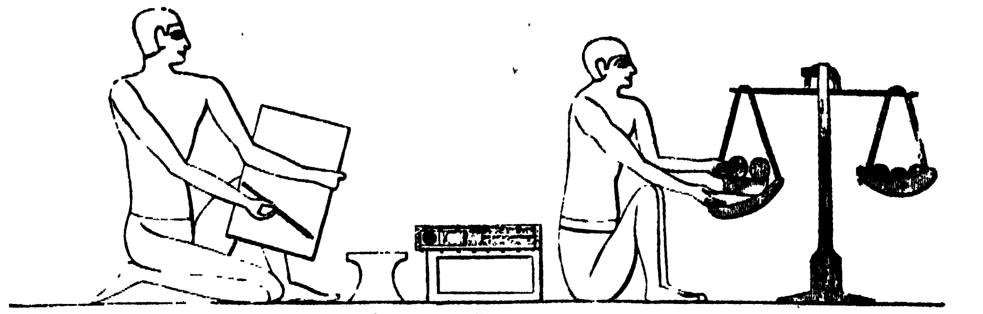
1025.—Mercury.
Mercher.



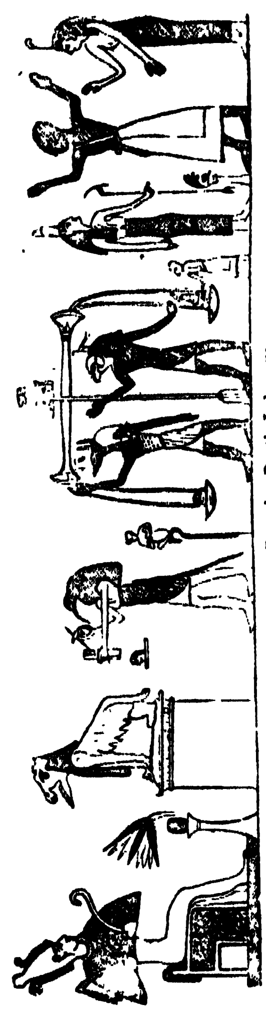
10[illegible].—Group of Altars—a, a, Babylonian; b, Egyptian; c, c, Persian; d, d, Grecian; e, e, Roman.
Grŵp o Allorau—a, a, Babiloniaidd; b, Eifftaidd; c, c, Persaidd; d, d, Groegaidd; e, e, Rhufeinaidd.



1030.—Ancient Egyptian Scales.
Hen Glorian Aiphtaidd.



1031.—Ancient Egyptian Scales.
Hen Glorian Aiphtaidd.



1032.—Ancient Egyptian Death-Judgment.
Hen Orsedd Marwolaeth Aiphtaidd.



1033.—Daniel in the Lion's Den.
Daniel yn Ffau y Llewod.



1034.—From a Block of Marble found near the Tomb of Daniel at Susa.



1035.—Gem, from the Ruins of Babylon.
Gem, a gafwyd yn Adfeilion Babilon.



1036.—Statue of a Lion standing over a Man, found at Babylon.
Cerfiun o Lew yn sefyll ar Ddyn, a gafwyd yn Babilon.



1037.—Head of Alexander.
Pen Alexander.

SUNDAY XLII.—DANIEL.



OWEVER, the favour which Daniel received at the hands of the new king was highly displeasing to the native princes and governors, and they resolved to compass his ruin. They knew too well the purity of his public administration to indulge any hope of substantiating any charge against him in that respect; but they also knew his uncompromising adherence to the obligations of his peculiar religion, and were not without hope of thereby effecting his downfall. The fear of arousing the suspicion of Darius to their design, obliged them to cast their net very widely. They proposed to the king that he should issue a decree that whoever should petition to any god—*but himself*—for the space of a month, should be cast into the den of lions. In this assumption of divine honours by kings there was nothing unparalleled; and the easy and somewhat vain king, taking it as a mark of affection and loyalty to him on his accession, too readily consented; and gave to it all the solemnity of one of those decrees which, when once issued, could not be recalled.

Daniel could not but know that this measure was really levelled at himself; yet he in nowise altered his customary services to the God of Israel. He did not even stoop to make his devotions secret; but thrice a day, as he had always been wont to do, he offered up his orisons with his windows open towards Jerusalem. Due note of this was taken by the enemies of Daniel, who hastened to the king, and accusing him of contempt and of rebellion against the royal decree, demanded the instant execution of its dreadful penalties against him. The unhappy king at once saw the snare which had been laid for the prophet and himself; but he saw also that he was under the most binding of known obligations to enforce the decree he had issued. His grief, his remorse, his rage, were alike impotent; and nothing was left him but to turn to the vague hope that the God whom Daniel so faithfully served, and by whom he had been so signally favoured, would interfere for his deliverance. Comforting himself with this assurance, which he imparted to the prophet, the king abandoned him to the punishment which the decree had awarded. Daniel was cast into the den of lions, the mouth of which was immediately closed with a large stone, which was sealed up with the king's own signet.

Darius, the king of the Medes and Persians, passed that night in sleepless sorrow: he refused to take his usual food, and forbade the instruments of music to be played before him. Very early in the morning, he left his bed, and hastened to the den of lions, still cherishing the faint hope that Daniel might be yet alive. When he drew near, he called out, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" A voice answered from the cavern, "O king, live for ever! My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths; inasmuch as before him innocency was found in me, and also against thee, O king, have I done no hurt." Overjoyed to find that the man whom he so highly esteemed had been thus miraculously preserved, Darius ordered that he should be immediately released from the dungeon; and directed that his accusers should be cast into the lions. The mighty power which had restrained the ravenous beasts from harm was then withdrawn, and the wretched plotters became in an instant the victims of their rage and hunger.

Several figures of lions have been found among the ruins of Babylon; some coins represent a lion's den under the walls of a fortress; and an intaglio found in the same quarter represents a man between two lions. It would perhaps be too much to say that any of this had special reference to the incident we have recorded; but they afford interesting corroboration to the Scriptural account by showing that lions were well known at Babylon, and that there were one or more dens of these animals in that great city. In the fulness of his satisfaction and astonishment, the king issued a decree to all the nations of his vast empire, commanding "that in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever," &c.

Nothing more is recorded of the personal history of Daniel, save that he lived through the reign of Darius the Mede, and into that of Cyrus; indeed, one of his visions is dated in the third year of Cyrus, when he must have reached the ninetieth year of his age. There is no reason to doubt that Daniel retained his authority and influence under the latter monarch, and there is much reason to conclude that he brought that great prince acquainted with those prophecies which had a long time before predicted not only the restoration of the Jews to their own land, but that this restoration was to be effected under a king named Cyrus. But although he had thus probably an important part in bringing about this result, there is no evidence that he availed himself of the privilege conceded to his countrymen. Some have asserted that he returned from captivity with Ezra, and took upon him the government of Syria; but it is more likely that he was too old to take part in so great a charge, and that, according to the usually received opinion, he died in Persia. Epiphanius and others affirm that he died at Babylon; and they say that his sepulchre was to be seen there, many ages after, in the royal cave. But it seems more probable that, according to the common tradition, he was buried at Susa or Shusan, where he sometimes resided, probably in his official capacity, and where he was favoured with some of his last visions. (Dan. viii. 2, 8.) Josephus says that there was at Susa a magnificent edifice in the form of a tower, which was said to have been built by Daniel, and which served as a sepulchre for the Persian and Parthian kings. This in the time of the historian retained its perfect beauty, and presented a fine specimen of the prophet's skill in architecture. That this tower was built by Daniel there is little ground to believe; but that a monument of the kind would be ascribed to him by the numerous Jews resident in those parts in and before the time of Josephus is highly probable. Benjamin of Tudela mentions that he was shown the reputed tomb of Daniel at Susa on the Tigris; and at the present day, a tomb bearing his name is the only standing building among the ruins of Shus, the ancient Susa. The city itself is now a gloomy wilderness, inhabited by lions, hyænas, and other beasts of prey; and the tomb stands at the foot of the most elevated of the heaps of ruin, which time, by covering with mould and drift, has converted into mounds or hillocks. The structure is modern, and of the usual form of the tombs of holy men throughout that country; but nothing could have led to its being built there but the belief, attested by some previous monument, that it was the real site of the prophet's sepulchre. The tomb is a small building, but affords shelter to a few derveishes, who are supported by the alms of the pilgrims who visit the sepulchre. These derveishes are now the only inhabitants of Susa, and various species of wild and ravenous beasts roam at large over that spot on which some of the proudest palaces ever raised by human art, once stood.

The last six chapters of Daniel's book are occupied by the prophecies, in the form of visions, which were delivered at different times, but which are all in some degree connected as parts of one grand scheme, in which the interests of the Hebrew and Christian churches are concerned. They extend through many ages; and exhibit, under the most striking representations, the rise and fall of successive kingdoms: they characterise, in terms highly descriptive, the four great monarchies of the world, to be succeeded by that kingdom which is an everlasting dominion, and which shall not be destroyed. They even point out intermediate subdivisions of empires, particularly that of the four kingdoms into which the empire of Alexander should be broken.

Daniel not only predicted the events of the coming time with singular precision, but likewise accurately defined the time in which they were to be fulfilled. This was remarkably fulfilled in that illustrious prophecy of the "seventy weeks" (weeks of years, $7 \times 70 = 490$ years), to the bringing in of everlasting righteousness by the Messiah. In this and in the historical prophecies the predictions of Daniel were so exactly fulfilled, that those persons who would otherwise have been unable to resist the evidence in support of our religion which they disclosed, have not scrupled to affirm that they were written subsequently to the occurrences which they so faithfully describe. But it is contrary to all historical testimony, and contrary to all probability, that the Jews should have admitted into the canon of their sacred writ a book which contained pretended prophecies of what had already happened. A remarkable portion of these prophecies also refer to Antiochus Epiphanes; and so far from being written after his time, there is good reason to conclude that these prophecies existed in the Greek translation, at least a hundred years before that monarch lived; and this translation was in the possession of the Egyptians, who entertained no kindness for the Jews or their religion.

In the time of Josephus, Daniel was esteemed as one of the greatest of the prophets; but afterwards the stress which the Christians began to lay upon his prophecies to show that the Messiah had already come, turned their minds against him: and although they durst not dispute his authority as an inspired writer, they placed his book among those which are not considered prophetical, and there, in their Bibles, it still remains.

SUNDAY XLII.—BIBLE HISTORY.

BUT no sooner were they attired in their distinguishing vestments, and engaged in preparation for their burnt offerings, their incense and their sweet music, than a band of armed guards was sent in among them, with orders to put every one to the sword. Not one of that vast congregation escaped; and when the massacre was over, the idol was overthrown and broken in pieces, the temple itself was cast down and made a common jakes; and the miserable idolatry to which it was devoted never again became formidable in Israel.

But although Jehu thus bloodily punished others for deviating from the law of Moses, there was a point at which, like all the kings of Israel, he paused in his own observance of its injunctions. The deep-rooted schism which Jeroboam had with so much of worldly policy established, and which was concentrated around the worship of the golden calves at Dan and Bethel, was maintained by him in its full vigour. This halting obedience did not satisfy God; and on account of it—on account of his sparing the root, while he lopped off the branches of idolatry in Israel—prosperity in war was denied him; and the Syrians, under Hazael, in his days "cut Israel short," by seizing the territories beyond the Jordan.

We may now turn to notice what happened at Jerusalem when the dead body of King Ahaziah had been brought thither from Megiddo. During his reign his mother Athaliah had enjoyed the pleasures of power; and when he was cut off, she resolved that it should not pass from her hands. This, from the position of affairs, she could only effect by directly grasping the crown, and boldly seizing all the powers which the state vested in its head. She did this; and, to secure the power she had usurped, she directed all the seed royal to be put to death. One of her grandchildren alone escaped, the infant Joash, who was still at the bosom of his nurse, and who was secretly conveyed away by his aunt (the sister of the late king) Jehosheba, the wife of the high-priest Jehoiada, into the temple, where he was brought up with great care, until it should be deemed proper to introduce him to the people as their rightful sovereign. Athaliah meanwhile ruled with absolute sway. She revived the worship of Baal in the great house which she had built in honour of that idol; and used every means in her power to discountenance and depress the interests of the true religion as administered by the servants of Jehovah.

In the sixth year of her reign, 878 B.C., when Joash had entered upon the seventh year of his age, Jehoiada resolved to place him upon the throne of his fathers; and, in concert with the priests and Levites, who readily acceded to the measure, a day was fixed for the execution of the design. Accordingly, on the day appointed, the avenues and gates of the temple being strictly guarded by the Levites to prevent surprise from the party of Athaliah, the young prince was conveyed, under a strong escort of priests, to the inner court of the temple, and was there anointed and proclaimed king of Judah. The loud and unwonted acclamations in the temple-courts attracted the attention of Athaliah in her palace, and she hastened to the sanctuary to learn the cause. She there beheld the young Joash standing by the pillar which was the usual station of the kings, with the crown royal on his head; which, with the hearty shouts of the people, "Long live the king!" made known to her the event. Her rage on making this discovery was without bounds; and she called upon the people to avenge the treason and redress her wrongs. But not a hand was raised or a weapon moved in her behalf; and at a nod from the high-priest, she was taken forth from the temple and put to death. The idolatrous worship which she had upheld was at the same time put down, the temple of Baal was demolished, and his priest Mattan was slain before the unholy altar.

Jehoiada, who was a man of equal sagacity and devotion, availed himself of the favourable disposition of the people to engage them to renew the ancient covenant with Jehovah—to serve him only, and to regard themselves as his peculiar people—and, at the same time, to expound the constitutional relations between the king and his subjects as settled at the foundation of the monarchy, but which had been forgotten or neglected during the violent usurpation and arbitrary government of Athaliah. The obligations resulting from these relations, the king on the one part, and the people on the other, pledged themselves to observe. Thus the accession of Joash was in many respects a revival of the theocratical and civil principles upon which the government had been established.

During the minority of the king, the affairs of the government were conducted by the venerable Jehoiada; but no sooner did Joash reach an age which qualified him to discharge the duties of his high station, than he was invested with full powers, and the high-priest was content to tender his advice and offer his suggestions.

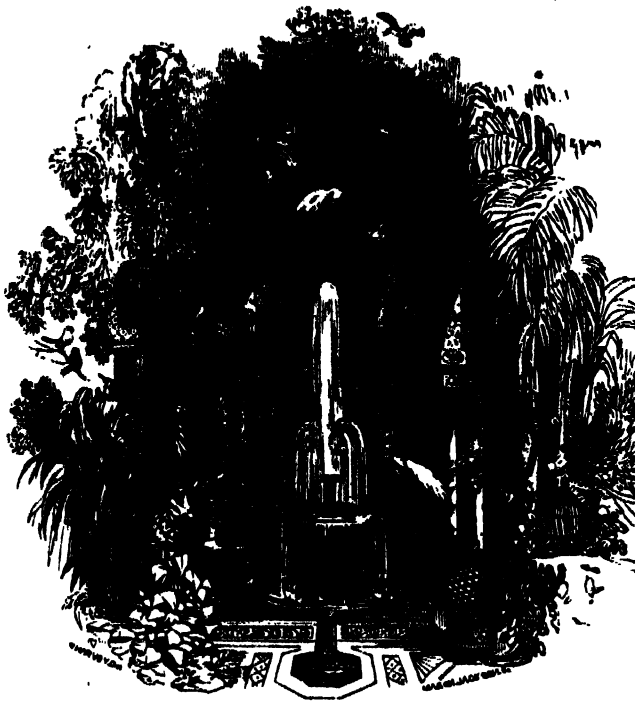
One of the first objects to which the attention of the young king was directed, was the dilapidated condition of the temple. During the late reigns, in which the influence of Ahab's house had been felt in Judah, the sacred fabric had been much neglected, and the funds which should have been devoted to its maintenance had been unclaimed or devoted to other uses. The high-priest at first recommended the renewal of the tax which had been imposed by Moses to defray the expenses connected with sacred things: but as it was found that the people did not cheerfully submit to a payment to which they were unaccustomed, it was very judiciously turned into a voluntary contribution, and then more than sufficient was speedily raised to restore the sacred building to something like its original magnificence.

Jehoiada lived to the advanced age of one hundred and thirty years, and at his death, in 850 B.C., the general sense of his great public services was evinced by the unexampled honours rendered to his remains, which were allowed a place in the sepulchre of the kings. Judah had much cause to mourn his loss; for, when he was removed, the king began to listen to less experienced and less wise advisers. Under this new influence the covenant into which he had entered at his accession became a light thing in his eyes: he first neglected the service of Jehovah, and thence, by imperceptible degrees, was led by his unprincipled advisers into the open sanction of and participation in idolatrous acts. He had been too well brought up to do these things with an untroubled conscience; and thence the remonstrances of the priests and prophets at length stung him so deeply that he refused to hear them any more. The importunate remonstrances of the high-priest Zecharias, the son of his benefactor Jehoiada, and the companion of his youth, in particular annoyed him so greatly that he gave his consent that he should be murdered. This horrid deed, alone sufficient to stamp any reign with disgrace and horror, was perpetrated in the very temple; and the last words of the slaughtered priest were—"The Lord look upon it, and requite it."

The last words of the martyred priest fell not to the ground. The ambitious, able, and warlike Hazael was still upon the throne of Syria, and was then in possession of the rich territories beyond the Jordan, which formed the heritage of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, of which he had made himself master, after gaining several battles over the forces of Jehu and his son. He turned his armies against Judah, and advanced against Jerusalem. Joash was in no condition to oppose this formidable invasion, and resolved to purchase the retreat of an army which he durst not face in the field. He accordingly stripped the temple of its rich vessels of silver and gold, and adding them to all the treasure he could command, sent the gift to Hazael, and implored him to retire from the country. The Syrian did so: but such a recourse was not calculated to purchase a long truce, and the very next year the hosts of Syria again appeared under the walls of Jerusalem. Joash had no treasure left with which to repeat the experiment of the preceding year, and therefore hazarded a battle. He was defeated, and the Syrians entered the gates, and put the city to military execution. The chiefs who had seduced the youth of Joash to evil were slain in the battle, and he was himself grievously wounded; and after the Syrians had retired to their own country, laden with the plunder of Jerusalem, he was slain in his bed by two of his officers, under a conspiracy which these disasters had excited. This was in 840 B.C., after he had reigned forty years. Joash was succeeded by his son Amaziah.

In Israel, to which we now return, Jehu, after having seen his dominion shorn by the Syrians, died in 856 B.C., having reigned twenty-eight years. He was succeeded by his son Jehoahaz, whose reign of seventeen years is distinguished by few events but such as were connected with the war with the Syrians, in which the latter, under Hazael, were so generally successful, that by the end of this reign not only had the crown of Israel lost its fair possessions beyond the Jordan, but the magnificent army had been reduced to fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand foot: "for the king of Syria had destroyed them, and made them like the dust by thrashing."

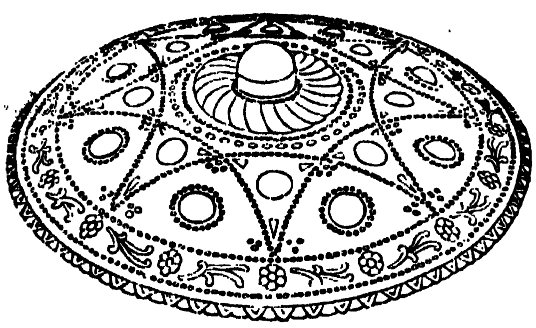
Jehoahaz was succeeded in the throne of Israel by his son Joash, who began to reign in the thirty-seventh year of his namesake, Joash king of Judah, B.C. 841. Instructed by the calamities of his predecessors, the young king manifested some disposition to



1037*.—Garden House.
Ty Gardd.



1038.—Garden House.
Ty Gardd.



1041.—Part of the Head-tire.
Rhan o Benwisg.



1040.—Head-tire.
Penwisg.



1039.—Cavalcade.
Marchogion.



1042.—Painted Eye.
Llygad Coloredig.



1043.—Ancient Egyptian Painted Eye, with the Colour-pot and Pencil.
Llygaid Coluredig yr Hen Alpht, gyd â'r Cawg coluro a Phwyntel.



1046.—Street Dogs of Syria.
Cwn Heolydd Syria.



1044.—Painted Eyes.
Llygaid Coluredig.



1045.—Female Head-tire.
Penwisg Benyw



1047.—Roman Charioteer.
Cerbydwr Rhufeinaidd.



1050.—Mount Tabor.
Mynydd Tabor



1048.—Scene in Mountains of Gilead. Ruins of Gerash.
Golygfa yn Mynyddoedd Gilead. Adfeilion Geras.



1049.—Saul and the Witch of En-dor. (Salvator Rosa.)—1 Sam. xxix.
Saul a'r Ddewines o Endor.

cleave to Jehovah and to guide himself by the counsels of Elisha. He was, however, soon deprived of the latter; for the prophet became sick unto death, and in his last hours was visited by his sovereign. The prophet desired him to take bow and arrows, and shoot with them through the open window eastward; he did so—and was told that he should smite the Syrians in Aphek. He was then directed to smite with the arrows upon the ground. He smote thrice and stayed: and the prophet was distressed that he had not more frequently repeated the symbolical strokes, since he could now only foretell that he should prevail three times against the Syrians. The death of Hazael, whose name had for so many years been a terror throughout Israel, enabled Joash to realise the prediction of the prophet. Benhadad, who then ascended the throne of Syria, was not less hostile to the Israelites than his father, but was far inferior to him in military talents, and soon had the mortification of seeing most of his conquests torn from him. This recovery of the possessions which his father had lost formed the principal feature of Joash's reign of seventeen years. He died in B.C. 825, and was succeeded by his son Jeroboam II. This prince prosecuted with success the war with the Syrians, and, not content with extending to the utmost limits the territory of Israel, he carried his arms into the Syrian dominions; and even the capital, Damascus, surrendered to his forces. These conquests were the immediate results of a great victory over Benhadad which had been foretold by Jonah the prophet.

But the inward prosperity of the kingdom of Jeroboam was not in proportion to this show of outward splendour. The king did not discourage by example or decree the adorations, or even the foreign superstitions, to which the Israelites had manifested a strong tendency ever since the reign of Ahab. Hence the latter years of this, upon the whole, prosperous reign were troubled, and it was succeeded by a wild anarchy, the immediate cause and duration of which have not been ascertained; but it was not until eleven years after his death that his son Zechariah obtained possession of the sceptre, B.C. 784.

In the kingdom of Judah the unhappy Joash was succeeded by his son Amaziah, who is said to have "done right in the sight of the Lord," but, it is added, "not with a perfect heart." He began his reign by putting the murderers of his father to an ignominious death, but forbore, according to the injunctions of the law, and contrary to the usual practice of the East, to involve the children in the fate of their parents. Feeling strong in his kingdom, Amaziah made an attempt to recover the revolted kingdom of the Edomites. He was enabled to raise an army of three hundred thousand men in his own dominions, and added to these one hundred thousand men,—veterans trained in the Syrian wars,—whom he hired from his neighbour the king of Israel. This alliance with a people tainted with idolatry was, however, offensive to God, and he was assured by a prophet that, if he took these seemingly valuable auxiliaries into the field, his arms could not prosper. "But," said the king, "what shall we do for the hundred talents of silver which I have given to the army of Israel?" The man of God answered, "The Lord is able to give thee much more than this." On this the king separated the auxiliaries from his own army, and desired them to return to their homes. This was a great act of faith on the part of Amaziah, not only as respected his future operations, but because he must have felt that the troops of Israel were likely to be exasperated and their king offended at their dismissal. In fact the auxiliary legions felt their being sent back as an insult; and, being disappointed of the prospect of spoil in Edom, plundered several of the cities of Judah in their way home, and slew many of their inhabitants. Amaziah was, however, victorious over the Edomites in a great battle fought in the Valley of Salt: ten thousand of them were slain before him, and ten thousand, who had been taken captives, he cruelly destroyed by casting them down from the high cliffs of their native mountains. The nation was not, however, permanently brought under the yoke of Judah.

Among the spoils which Amaziah brought home from Edom were some idolatrous images, which, on some account or other, so much engaged his attention that he set them up as objects of worship, and the service of Jehovah was once more neglected in Judah. The enormity of this offence, and the gross infatuation of a worship rendered to the idols of a people he had overcome, was severely reproved by a prophet. But the king, who had become mightily exalted in his own esteem, resented the faithful admonition. "Art thou made of the king's council?" he exclaimed. "Forbear; why shouldst thou be smitten?" The prophet accordingly forbore; and only added the words of deep meaning—"I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened to my counsel."

From that time the tide of prosperity turned against Amaziah. It seems that he had on his return from the campaign against the Edomites expressed some resentment at the conduct of the auxiliaries of Israel on their return through the land of Judah; and failing to obtain satisfaction from king Joash, challenged him to decide the matter in the field; and it seems very likely, from the reply of the latter, that, as Josephus supposes, he advanced the now obsolete pretensions of the house of David to the allegiance of all the tribes. The reply of Joash advised him not to be carried away by his victory over the Edomites, but to rest content with what he had gained, and not tempt his own ruin. Exasperated at the sarcastic terms in which this answer was conveyed, Amaziah became the more eager for this expedition, "which," says Josephus, "I suppose was by the impulse of God, that he might be punished for his offence against him." He marched forthwith to meet the king of Israel, and in the battle fought at Beth-shemesh was utterly defeated and taken prisoner. The conqueror marched on to Jerusalem, and the painful spectacle was then exhibited of a king of Judah entering his own metropolis as a captive in the train of a king of Israel. This was followed by the still more distressing circumstance of a king of Israel making spoil of the precious things in the house of God—with which, and the treasures of the royal palace, he departed, leaving Amaziah at liberty; but not until he had cast down a large portion of the city wall as a monument of his triumph.

This event seems to have crippled Amaziah, and kept him quiet during the remainder of his reign, though he outlived his conqueror fifteen years. He at length perished through a conspiracy among his own servants. Being made aware of his danger in Jerusalem, he fled to Lachish, but was pursued and put to death, leaving the crown to his son Azariah, a youth sixteen years old, better known in sacred history by the name of Uzziah, 810 B.C.

The government and character of this young prince were entirely free from the crimes and errors which disgraced his father's reign. His eminent piety gave new lustre to the throne on which he sat, and gave strength and glory to his dominion. He recovered Elath in the Red Sea; the Philistines and the tribes of the desert felt the power of his arms, and the Ammonites were constrained to pay him tribute. His enlarged resources he employed in strengthening his kingdom, and in bringing to perfection various useful inventions, or introducing them from foreign parts. He repaired and strengthened the walls of Jerusalem, and planted upon the towers and bulwarks "engines invented by cunning men, to shoot arrows and great stones withal." He also organised the army, and could bring into the field more than 300,000 well-armed men, for whom he provided a vast store of the weapons and armour in use among the Israelites, consisting of shields and spears, and helmets, and habergeons, and bows and slings to cast stones. But while he thus stood prepared for war, he cultivated beyond most kings the arts of peace; for we are told that "also he built towers in the desert, and digged many wells, for he had much cattle both in the low countries and in the plains: husbandmen also and vine-dressers in the mountains and in Carmel, for he loved husbandry." Thus "he was marvellously helped till he was strong." But, alas for human strength! for it is immediately added—"But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction." This self-exaltation was manifested in a shape unusual in Judah—not in any departure from God, but in an attempt to take the part of a priest in the services of religion. In many nations, as Uzziah knew, the priestly and regal functions were united; and he had but a dim perception of the peculiar principles of the Hebrew theocracy which excluded him from this privilege. In a rash hour he took a censer, and went into the holy place which none but the priest might enter, and attempted to offer incense, which was the peculiar function of the priesthood. This the priests resisted: but the king was disposed to stand upon his supposed right; and a most unseemly fray was likely to have arisen in the sanctuary, when the king was suddenly smitten with leprosy. He was then hurried forth by the priests as an unclean person—nay, he hastened away himself to hide his confusion and his shame. He lived apart as a leper during the remainder of his life, and his son Jotham administered the government in his name. Uzziah died in 758 B.C., when Jotham exchanged his regency for the sovereignty of Judah.

The reign of Jotham was unmarked by great virtues or great crimes. But it was, in its sort, a merit in those days for a king to rule without offence; and Jotham's reign was by no means unprosperous. He maintained or recovered the ascendancy over the neighbouring nations which his father had acquired; and he repaired the temple, and built several cities in different parts of his dominions At his death, in 772 B.C., Jotham was succeeded by his son Ahaz

SUNDAY XLII.—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

IN the private circles in which Paul and Barnabas recounted what the Lord had effected through their preaching among the Gentiles, their accounts were received with much interest and satisfaction. But at length some converts, who had passed over from the school of the Pharisees, began to demur at the exemption of the Gentiles from circumcision, and hinted at the necessity of subjecting Titus to that rite. But Paul strenuously asserted the equal privileges of the Gentiles in the kingdom of God, and affirmed that their faith placed them in the same position towards God as believing Jews. This controversy gave rise to so much vehement discussion, that it was thought necessary that the subject should be considered and settled in a convention of the whole church; but this was afterwards changed into a meeting of chosen delegates.

In this first Council of the Christian church, held in 52 A.D., Peter stood up and appealed to the testimony of his own experience in the matter of Cornelius, in favour of the view which Paul had taken. The weighty words in which he urged the conclusions derivable from this experience were heard with profound attention; and, as no one undertook to answer them, Paul, and after him Barnabas, rose to state the results of their own experience to the same effect, and appealed with great force to the miracles by which God had been pleased to aid and sanction their labours. When the minds of the assembly had been thus prepared, James came forward with a proposal suited to his own peculiar moderation, and well suited to compose the existing differences. James was held in great respect by the Jews, from his strictness in observing the law, and therefore his words had the greater weight with the converts of the Jewish pale. Referring to the preceding statements, he skilfully demonstrated that in this admission of the Gentiles into the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, the eternal purposes of God, as announced in old time by the prophets, had been fulfilled; and it behoved them to be careful not to obstruct or retard so great a work. He therefore proposed that they should enjoin nothing further upon the converted Gentiles than abstinence from meat offered to idols, or of animals strangled, from blood, and from unchastity. Most of these things belong to the precepts to which men were trained before the giving of the law (Gen. ix. 1—7); and, therefore, although included in the law of Moses, were not peculiar to it. The observance of these offered a sort of common ground, in which the Jewish and Gentile converts could meet; and the suggestions of James approved itself to the good sense of the meeting, and, under the influence of that higher spirit by which their councils were animated, were immediately adopted, and were forthwith carried into effect by being formally communicated to the Gentile churches in Syria and Asia Minor, in an epistle drawn up in the name of the assembly. Two persons of high repute in the church, Joses, surnamed Barrabas, and Silas, were chosen to be the bearers of this important missive, and to accompany Paul and Barnabas, whose authority would be much supported by the presence and aid of persons known to be delegates from the church at Jerusalem. A copy of the letter, the earliest public document of the Christian church, is given in Acts xvi. 23—29. They were also accompanied by the nephew of Barnabas, John surnamed Mark, who had been the companion of the first journey of Paul and Barnabas into Asia, but who had left them when they entered Pamphylia, and returned to Jerusalem. Here Barnabas met him again, and, having brought him to a sense of his former misconduct, induced him to become once more their companion.

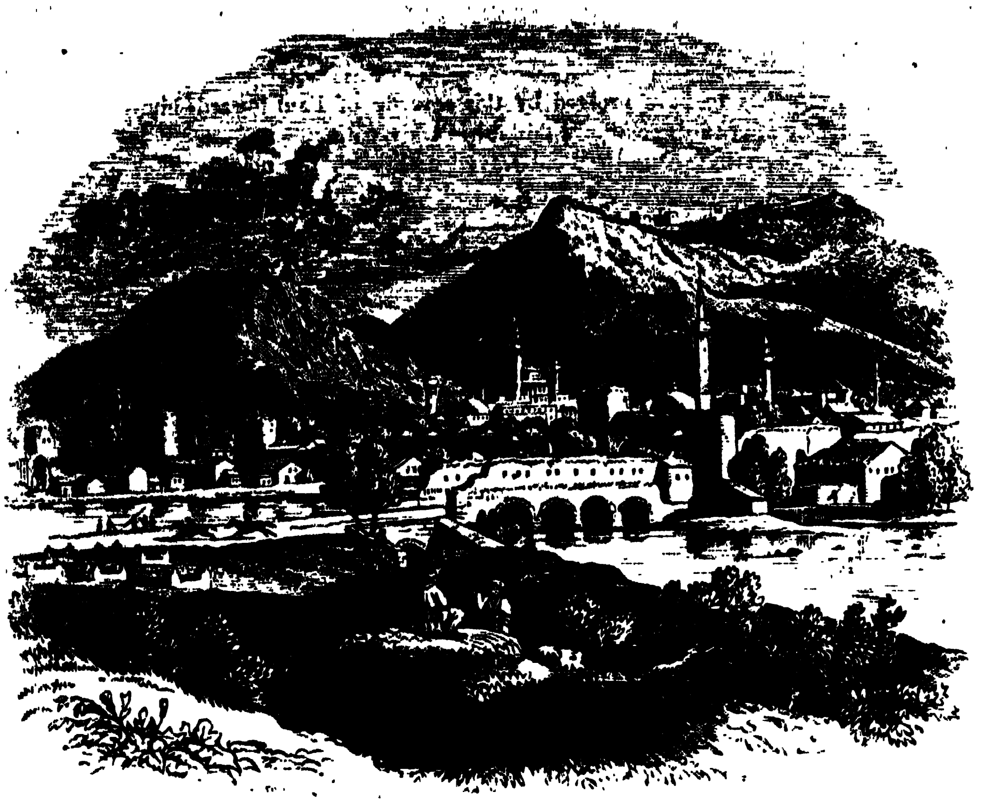
After Paul and Barnabas had spent some time with the church at Antioch, they resolved to revisit the churches which they had in their former journey into Asia Minor established, and to extend their operations still further in the same direction. Barnabas wished to take his nephew, Mark, again with them as a companion: but Paul thought that his unfitness for this vocation was evinced by the lightness with which he had formerly cast off its obligations, and he refused his assent to the proposal. Barnabas took this so ill, that he parted company from one with whom he had hitherto so diligently and affectionately laboured. He struck out another sphere of action for himself; and, taking Mark with him, departed for Cyprus, his native country. Paul then, on his part, adopted Silas for a companion, and proceeded to work out the original plan of the journey. Good came out of this seeming evil; for the sphere of labour was enlarged by this separation; and Mark himself seems to have profited by this severity of Paul towards him, for he afterwards continued faithful in his vocation.

On leaving Antioch, Paul travelled through the neighbouring parts of Syria, to Cilicia, Pisidia, and the towns in which he had laboured in his first journey. At Lystra—the town where he had been first worshipped and then stoned—he found a young man named Timothy, who, by the instructions of his mother—a pious Jewess, but married to a heathen—had received religious impressions which had an abiding effect. His mother was converted when the apostle first visited the town, and young Timothy also became a zealous confessor of the Gospel. Even at Iconium Paul heard of his Christian zeal; and the church to which he belonged entertained the belief that he was destined for great things in the Church of Christ. Paul heard this of his young convert with great joy, and gladly permitted him to accompany him in his travels, to render him the services which in those days disciples rendered to their teachers, and to witness and to take part in his labours and sufferings.

After Paul had visited the churches already founded in those districts, he proceeded to Phrygia. It was scarcely possible that he should visit all the large towns of this large and populous province; and he therefore seems to have left much to be accomplished by his pupils, such, for instance, as by Epaphras at Colossæ, who afterwards founded a church there, and in the towns of Hierapolis and Laodicea. It is evident that Paul took much interest in these churches, to the first of which he wrote an invaluable epistle, in which the others are mentioned. (Col. iv. 13, 15, 16), and in which the name of Epaphras repeatedly occurs (i. 7; iv. 12, 13); and it seems most probable that the relation which he formed with them, and which led them to regard him as their spiritual father, took place during this journey in the way which has been indicated.

From Phrygia Paul proceeded northward to Galatia, where his divine message appears to have been well received. Some interesting particulars concerning this visit are preserved in the Epistle to the Galatians, which the Acts of the Apostles do not record. Paul often speaks of unusual affliction, which he calls "a thorn in his flesh—the messenger of Satan to buffet him" (2 Cor. xii. 7), by which he was often humbled and brought low. What this was cannot be known. Some think it was a diminutive stature; others, diseased eyes; others, an imperfect utterance; others, more probably, that it was some acute bodily pain, which gave to his person a wasted and wan, if not a distorted appearance. He was under the strong influence of this infirmity when he visited Galatia; but the divine power of his word and his works contrasted so strikingly with the feebleness of the material organ, that the stronger impression was therefore made upon the susceptible Galatians. He mentions this very gratefully in his epistle to them: "My temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Jesus Christ." He adds afterwards, "I bear you witness that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked your own two eyes and have given them to me;" and this is the passage which has chiefly led some to suppose that the "infirmity" of Paul lay in his eye-sight.

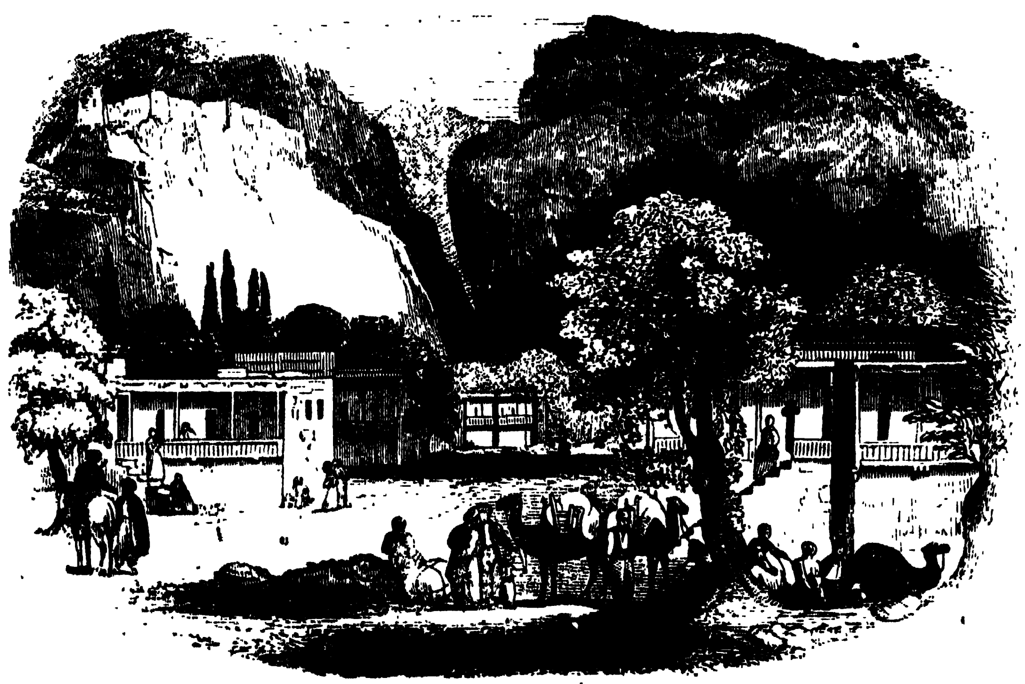
On leaving Galatia, Paul was at first uncertain in what direction to turn, since new fields of labour opened to him on different sides. At one time he contemplated going in a south-westerly direction, to Proconsular Asia, and afterwards of passing in a northerly direction into Mysia and Bithynia; but either by an inward voice or a vision he received a monition from the Divine Spirit which caused him to abandon both these plans. He then formed an intention of passing into Europe; but waiting to see whether he should be encouraged or withheld by a higher guidance, he betook himself to Troas; and a nocturnal vision, in which he beheld a man in the garb of a Macedonian calling to him for aid, confirmed his resolution to visit Macedonia. At Troas he met with Luke the physician, perhaps one of the proselytes who had been converted by him at Antioch, and who now joined the party of Paul, and remained attached to it in labour and travel till the inspired record terminates. That record, as contained in the Acts of the Apostles, is usually held to have been written by Luke; and it would appear that he wrote it at Rome during St. Paul's first imprisonment, and while his cause, which he had referred to the imperial tribunal, was still undecided. At least the narrative is, as we shall find, brought down to that point, and there stops with some abruptness—which is strongly in favour of this conclusion. Henceforth Luke is to be regarded as a companion of St. Paul, except during a short interval, although he scarcely allows his own presence to be indicated in his narrative, otherwise than by the occasional use of the pronoun *we*, in recording the proceedings of the apostolical mission.



1052.—Antioch. (Casas.)
Antiochia.



1053.—Paul Preaching to the Galatians.
Paul yn Pregethu i'r Galatiaid.



1054.—Colossæ: present state.
Colossæ: sefyllfa bresennol.



1055.—Ruins.
Adfeilion.



1056.—Laodicea.



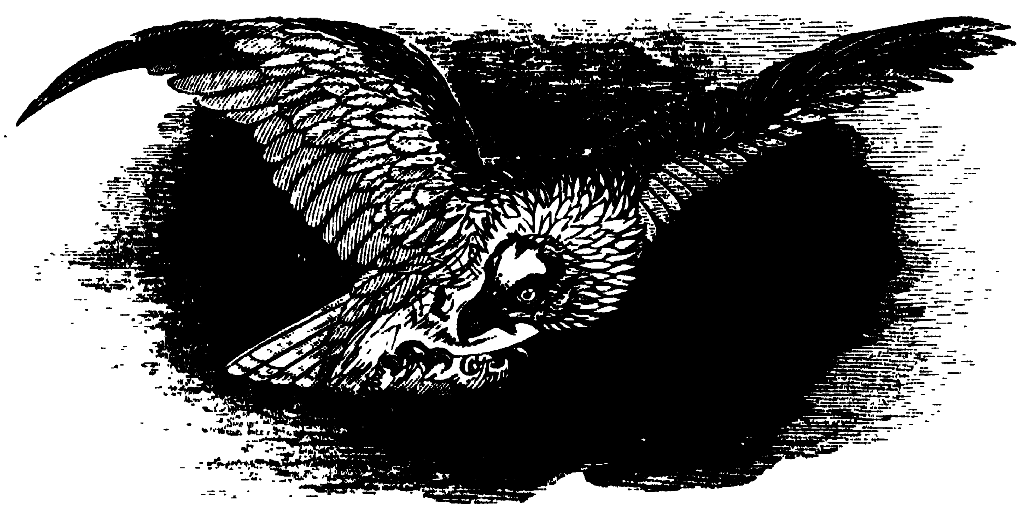
1057.—Ruined Temple.
Teml Adfeiliedig.



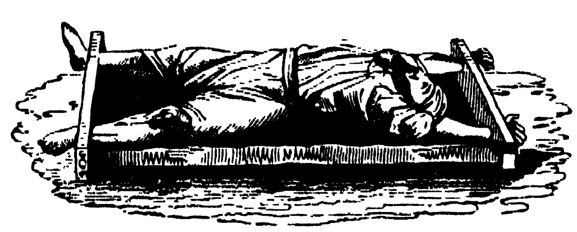
1058.—Tatar, or Turkish Courier.
Rhedegwr Tataraidd, neu Dyrcaidd.



1059.—Mandarin with Emperor's Letter.
Mandarin yn cludo Llythyr Ymherawdwr.



1060.—Eagle hastening to his Prey.
Eryr yn prysuro at ei Ysglyfaeth.



1062.—Indian Stocks.
Cyffion Indiaidd.



1061.—Wild Ass.
Asyn Gwyllt.



1063.—Wooden Collar.
Colar Goed.

SUNDAY XLIII.—JOB.



HE vindication of Job was interrupted by Bildad the Shuhite, who attacked the sufferer with more keenness than Eliphaz, but with less bitterness than Zophar, the next assailant. He renewed the charge which Eliphaz had advanced, but with less eloquence and less delicacy. His first address is short, and occupies only the eighth chapter.

Job was not slow to answer this fresh attack with becoming spirit. He again defended himself most strenuously against the argument that, since God had afflicted him so grievously, he must needs have been a most wicked man: but at the same time he admitted that he could not claim to be entirely sinless. He confesses before God his imperfections—appealing to the Divine compassion; and, failing to divine the cause of his misfortunes, he looks to the land of shadows for relief. This reply fills the ninth and tenth chapters.

Zophar the Naamathite then came forward, with a reply to this vindication. He exceeds the other two in the severity of his censure; and although he does little more than repeat and exaggerate the arguments which Bildad had previously employed, he is by far the most inveterate of Job's accusing friends, and speaks without tenderness or pity. This speech occupies the eleventh chapter. Job's answer, which occupies the three following chapters, commences with a severe sarcasm upon the airs of superiority which Zophar and his other friends assumed. He re-asserts his own opinion on the matter in dispute, and accuses his friends of employing improper and weak arguments in defending the justice of God. He then expresses a fervent wish that God himself would examine his case with that compassion for his weakness which man denied. He next launches forth into a vivid description of the miseries of man's life, and implores for a temporary refuge in the grave till the days of trouble are overpast. This latter part of his reply contains some of the finest passages in the book.

It begins thus:—

> "Man that is born of woman
> Is of few days, and full of trouble:
> He groweth up like a flower—and is cut down;
> He fleeth also like a shadow, and stayeth not."

And as we proceed, we come to a passage which, more than any other, has led to the opinion that Job had no expectation of a resurrection from the dead, nor perhaps of any life beyond the grave:

> "There is hope for a tree
> If it be cut down that it shall sprout again,
> And that its tender branches will not fail.
> Though its roots may have grown old in the earth,
> And though its trunk be dead upon the ground,
> At the scent of water it shall bud,
> And put forth boughs like a young plant.
> But man dieth—and he is gone for ever!
> Man expireth—and where is he?"
>
> Job xiv. 7–10. Noyes' translation.

Here, and in the sequel, Job seems clearly enough to intimate that the hope of another life would be a sufficient comfort under the miseries of this: and the absence of any such expectation accounts for the feeling which he constantly expresses of the severity of God's dealings with man, and of those complaints of his condition which to us, who possess this hope and consolation, appear unreasonable, and not seldom irreverent. This perhaps is the key to the position of Job in the great argument which he wages with his friends.

From the chapters the argument of which has thus been stated, a few points may be selected for particular notice.

In Job's reply to Bildad, he illustrates the swiftness with which man's days speed away, by some striking and rather unexpected comparisons. He says that they are "swifter than a post," or "courier;" which implies the existence of an accommodation which we should scarcely have expected at so early a period; and of which there is indeed no trace in the history of the Jews; perhaps because the narrow limits of their territory, and the absence of intercourse with foreign parts, rendered any other than occasional messengers unnecessary. When, however, the Hebrew history brings us into large empires, we find a regularly organised system of communication by couriers. This is implied in the way in which the Book of Esther describes the royal decrees concerning the Jews as being forwarded to all the provinces of the vast Persian empire "by the posts that rode upon mules and camels." In China the employment of couriers appears to have been of equally ancient origin, as would appear by some curious notices on the subject collected by the Jesuit missionaries from old Chinese books, and published in their 'Mémoires sur les Chinois.'

In the very next verse he says of man's days:—

> "They are gone by like the swift ships,
> Like the eagle darting upon his prey:"

in which there seems to us a connection of ideas which appears to have escaped the notice of the commentators—the analogy of the motion in a ship sailing upon the waters, and of an eagle sailing through the air. It is a kind of connection of images which would occur to persons who have been in the habit of witnessing both kinds of motion, but not to others.

In Zophar's address (chap. xi. 12) there is a remarkable allusion to the washing of hands, which, although incidentally introduced as a symbol of inward purity, affords us an opportunity of explaining that it is now, and was among the nations whose usages are described in Scripture, usual in washing the hands for water to be poured from an ewer upon the hands, which were held over a basin which receives the waste water. This cannot be conveniently done without assistance; and hence Elisha, as the immediate follower and attendant of Elijah, is described as one who had poured water upon his hands.

The expression of Zophar:

> "For vain man would be wise,
> Though man be born a wild-ass colt," (xi. 12)

has engaged considerable attention from the boldness and effect of the figure. We make the ass an emblem of stupidity, for which no good reasons have ever been alleged. The Hebrews made the ass, that is the *tame* ass, a symbol of contented and patient labour (Gen. xlix. 14, 15); but the wild ass of the desert, which is here intended, was with them a symbol of extreme contumacy and ferocity. "A wild-ass colt," "a wild-ass man," were proverbial expressions to this effect. It is thus applied to Ishmael, and with remarkable appropriateness, if understood to apply to him as a progenitor of the Arabian tribes (Gen. xvi. 12). The proverb still exists among the Arabians, to describe an obstinate, indocile, and contumacious person.

In chap. xiii. 27, Job says of God:—

> "Yea, thou puttest my feet in the stocks;
> Thou watchest all my paths;
> Thou settest a print on the heels of my feet."

Most readers are surprised to find such venerable antiquity claimed for this once familiar implement for the punishment of wrong-doers—which still lingers in some of our villages. It is not, however, likely that the "stocks" mentioned by Job were the same as those known to ourselves; but the passage proves the antiquity of the practice of clogging or confining the feet by way of punishment. The only other mention of this punishment in Scripture is in the case of Jeremiah, whose feet were put into the stocks (Jer. xx. 2; xxix. 26), and in Prov. vii. 22. The particular form of this machine among the Jews cannot now be ascertained—whether they were encumbering clogs, or fetters, that did not absolutely prevent or only embarrassed motion, or were fixed, that kept the prisoners stationary. Both kinds are known to have been anciently in use. The fixed kinds, properly called stocks, were of different sorts, being frames of wood either for the feet only, or for the feet, the hands, and the neck at once. The last was very painful, and is mentioned in the accounts of the sufferings to which the early martyrs were subjected by their heathen persecutors. A sort of stocks is used now in India for confining both the hands and the feet, while the patient lies at full stretch upon his back. This position must be highly painful, notwithstanding the degree of freedom which the head enjoys. Of confinement for the head, such as our pillory or the Chinese collar, we do not read in Scripture; but it is not improbable that the phrase "thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet" may be illustrated from the practice of the Chinese of putting a seal over the part where the boards joined, so that it could not be opened without detection during the period in which it is appointed to be worn. Some interpret the passage less literally, and suppose that it is a metaphor derived from the mode of treating the wild ass, an animal so difficult to tame that it was necessary to clog its feet, in order to bring it under subjection; and in that case the "print" upon the heels of the feet may have referred to a brand upon the hoof as a mark of ownership.

SUNDAY XLIII.—BIBLE HISTORY.



THE disturbances which for some years kept back Zechariah from the throne of his father, Jeroboam, have already been noticed. Even by his accession in 773 B.C. the perturbations of this unhappy state were scarcely abated. His administration was limited to the short period of six months, when he was put to death by Shallum, who usurped the government. With the death of Zechariah ended the dynasty of Jehu, which was of longer duration than any other which had reigned in Israel. Shallum was not long suffered to enjoy the authority he had usurped; for in one short month after he was in his turn slain by Menahem, the general of the army, who mounted the throne in his stead. This act was not universally acceptable; and the country became the scene of intestine commotions, which Menahem at length subdued by his power with the army, but with a degree of barbarity which would have disgraced a foreign conqueror. It was in this reign that the Assyrians under Pul made their first appearance upon the borders of Israel. Menahem was in no condition to oppose the conquerors of the East; and he deemed it wiser to tender a timely submission, and to purchase peace at the price of a thousand talents of silver. In this distracted kingdom there were no accumulations of royal treasure, no rich temple like that of Jerusalem, to yield up gold and silver on such occasion. Menahem had therefore no other means of raising the sum he had agreed to pay the Assyrians than by a poll-tax of fifty shekels (about six pounds five shillings) each upon 60,000 of his wealthiest subjects. This is the first instance in either of the Hebrew kingdoms of money raised by taxation for a public object.

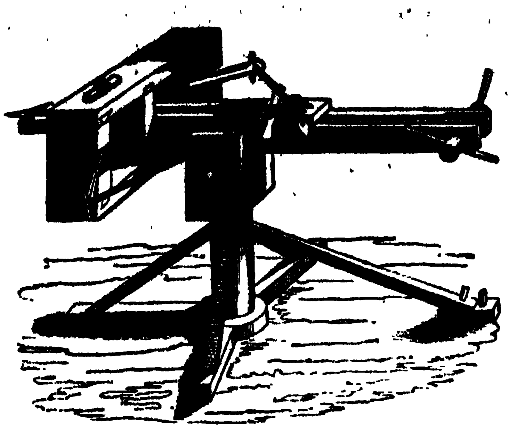
After a reign of ten years Menahem died in 763 B.C., and was succeeded in a government which had now become wholly military, by his son Pekahiah, who, after a short and distinguished reign of two years, was slain by Pekah, the commander of the forces, who placed himself upon the throne. Very soon after his accession this king entered into an alliance with Rezin, king of Syria, against Judah, which induced Ahaz, the king of the latter country, to seek the protection of the Assyrians. By a large and numerous subsidy he induced the king Tiglath-pileser to make a diversion in his favour, by invading and crippling Israel. The great conqueror did not feel bound to limit his operations according to the exigencies of the small sovereign who sought his aid; and he probably exceeded the intentions, and even wishes, of Ahaz in the hard measure which he dealt out to the neighbouring kingdom. The Assyrians reduced all the northern parts of Israel, took possession of several principal cities, and carried away captive a considerable number of the inhabitants of those districts, as well as of the districts east of the Jordan. This dismemberment of the kingdom, which reduced the dominions of Pekah to Samaria and the lands of Ephraim, and half Manasseh, excited great disaffection among his subjects, who knew that the invasion had been brought upon the land through his designs against Judah. A conspiracy was therefore formed against him, in which, after a reign of two years, he was slain, and Hoshea, who had headed the conspiracy, succeeded him in the government, 739 B.C.

Hoshea must have had some talent, and great things must have been expected from one who had been the organ of the popular discontent against Pekah. But he was unable to stem the tide of events, or to avert the doom from Heaven which had so long impended over this unhappy kingdom. Indeed the immediate events were, as appeared, to be hastened by the very measures which he took to preserve his country. The only power in those parts which was at all a match for the Assyrians was Egypt; and in proportion as their respective conquests brought their frontiers closer to each other, the highest jealousy existed between them respecting the fate and connections of the narrow dominions by which they were alone separated. Hoshea at first succumbed to the Assyrian power, by which he was pressed on the north and east, and agreed to pay tribute to Shalmaneser, the then king of Assyria: but, finding the yoke too heavy to be borne, he looked to Egypt for relief; and entered into an alliance with "So," or Sahaco, the king of Egypt. Upon the confidence which this league inspired, Hoshea ventured to seize and imprison the Assyrian officer, who seems to have been placed at his court in a capacity similar to that of our own political "residents" in the native courts of India. This brought down upon him the arms of the Assyrians, under Shalmaneser. This Hoshea must have expected: but he also expected help from Egypt, which came not. In the hope of relief from that quarter he valiantly maintained his ground for three years in his metropolis of Samaria against the Assyrian host: but during all that time the Egyptians made no movement in his behalf; and at length the besiegers obtained possession of the city, and destroyed it. The king was made prisoner, and sent in chains to Nineveh, where he appears to have lingered out the remnant of his days, as no further mention of him occurs in Scripture. According to the policy which prevailed in those times, and of which frequent examples have since occurred in the East, the flower of the inhabitants were transported to the Median provinces of the Empire 721 B.C.

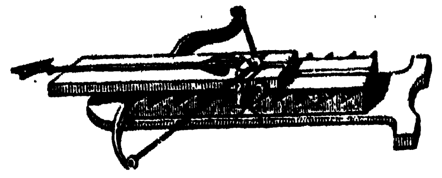
About forty years after this the then reigning King of Assyria, called in Scripture Esarhaddon, caused a census to be taken of the conquered kingdom, in order that the families which had escaped the first captivity might be sent away to the same distant lands to which their brethren had been transported. New colonies were brought from the East to supply the place of the expatriated tribes, by which means the name of Israel was soon extinguished in the land which God had given for an inheritance to the seed of Jacob. The new comers gradually combined with the dregs of the Israelites who remained in the country, and the population thus formed, being unable to claim the name of Israelites, took that of Samaritans, from the city of Samaria. The strangers were all idolaters; but according to the notions of local and national deities which then prevailed, they held themselves bound to know something of "the God of the country" in which they had settled. They were the more persuaded of this from the ravages of the wild beasts, particularly lions, which had increased marvellously with the decrease of the human population; and which they attributed to the wrath of "the God of the land" at the neglect with which he had been treated. A priest was therefore found to teach them how to worship aright the God of the country. He fixed his residence at Bethel; and the superficial and merely external character of his instructions may be estimated from the fact that, although the people feared the Lord, they served also their own gods. Gradually, however, their system became purified from this gross incongruity; and their worship and belief, although less regular in some of its observances, became as correct and as free from idolatrous taint as that of the Jews themselves. In later times, indeed, their system of belief may have been the purer of the two, seeing that it was based entirely upon the books of Moses, whereas that of the Jews became encumbered with an enormous mass of oral traditions.

The desolation of the kingdom of the ten tribes took place, according to Josephus (dating to the taking of Samaria), nine hundred and forty-seven years after the deliverance from Egypt, eight hundred years from the time of Joshua, and two hundred and forty years, seven months, and seven days, after they had revolted from Rehoboam, the grandson of David, and given the kingdom to his rival. Such a conclusion, the historian adds, overtook the Israelites when they transgressed the laws of God, and would not hearken to the prophets who foretold that this calamity would come upon them if they departed not from their evil ways.

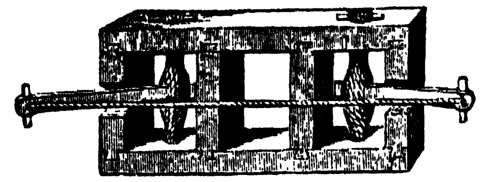
As for the tribes which were sent away beyond the Tigris in Assyria and Media, history loses sight of them altogether; and nothing of their state or final destiny is known. Conjecture has endeavoured to supply this neglect of history; but not with any signal success; under the impression that the ten tribes must needs be destined to obtain a part in those purposes of Divine mercy, obscurely indicated in the prophecies, for which the remnant of Judah has for so many ages been kept separate among the nations unto this day. In this belief the world has been ransacked through its whole extent for traces of them: and they have been supposed to be found in so many different nations, and among so many different disguises, that doubt is thrown upon all such researches by the want of harmony and concurrence in the identification. The probability is that not a few of them returned to Palestine under the decree of Cyrus, which was not necessarily, or even in terms, limited to the people of the kingdom of Judah, and that a still greater number returned from time to time, when they heard of the prosperity of their brethren in Palestine. But it is likely that the greater number were soon merged in the nations among whom their abode had been fixed; and in this there would be the less difficulty, as so many corrupt notions had been introduced among the ten tribes, and the law of Moses had been so little heeded before the captivity, that



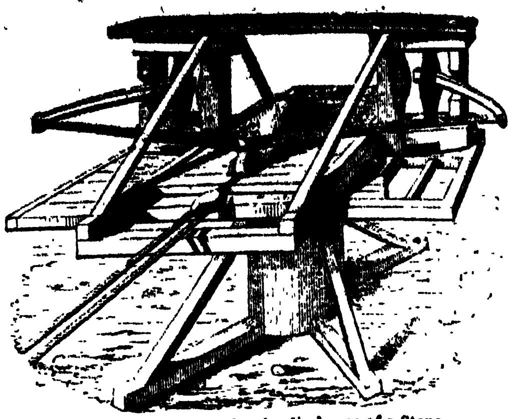
1064.—Catapulta prepared for the discharge of an Arrow. From Montfaucon.
Tafl-beiriant i ergydio Saeth. O Montfaucon.



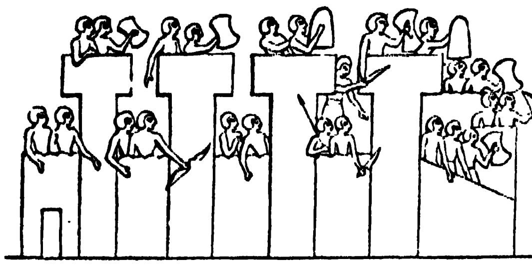
1066.—Scorpion.



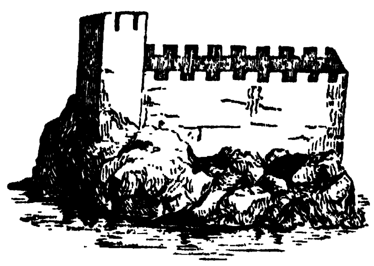
1065.—Head of the Catapulta, showing the rope, levers, and springs of twisted rope, by which the discharge was effected.
Pen Tafl-beiriant, yn dangos y rhaff, trosolion, trwythyrau, a rhaff gyfrodedd, gan y rhai yr achosid yr ergydion.



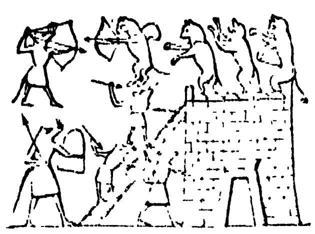
1067.—Balista prepared for the discharge of a Stone.
Llech-beiriant wedi cael ei barotôi i daflu Maen.



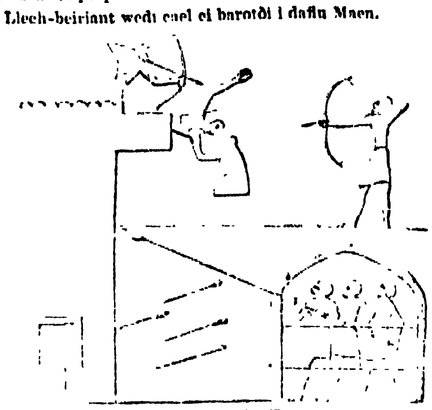
1071.—Wall and Towers Manned.
Mur a Thyrau Amddiffynol.



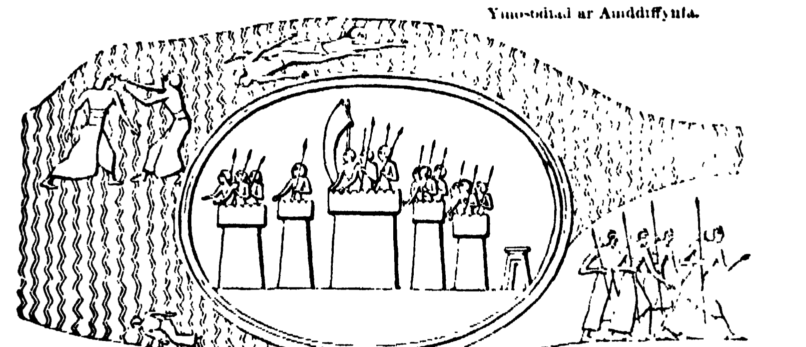
1068.—Fortress.
Amddiffynfa.



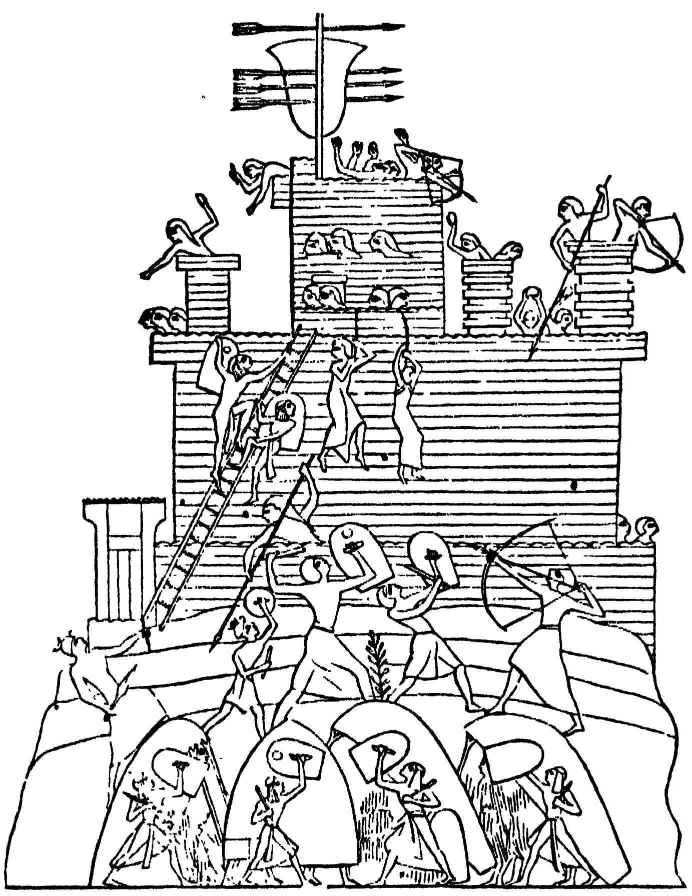
1069.—Detached Tower or Fort.
Twr neu Gastell gwahanedig.



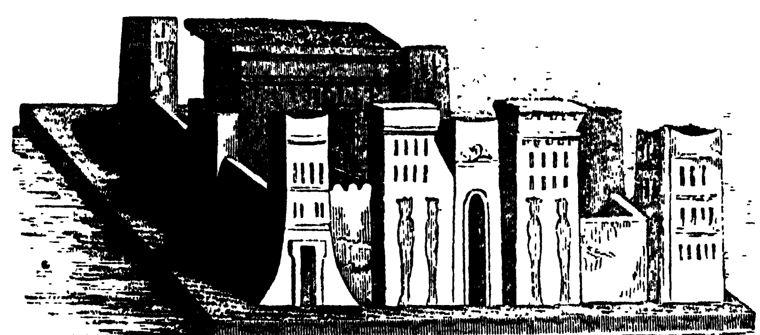
1070.—Fortress attacked: Testudo, &c.
Ymosodiad ar Amddiffynfa.



1074.—Fortress with Fosse and Double Wall.
Amddiffynfa âg iddi wrthglawdd a Mur Dyblyg.



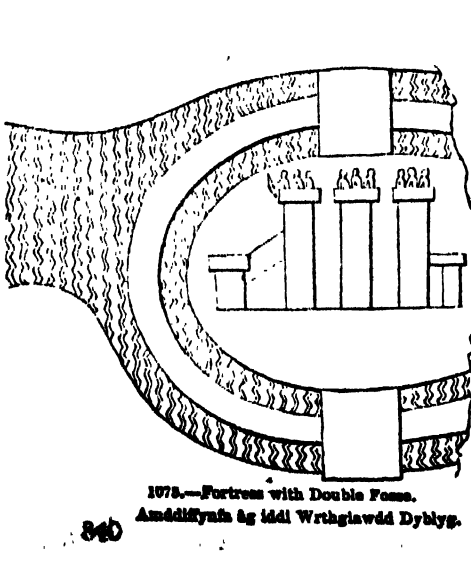
1072.—Storming a Fort.
Rhuthro ar Amgaerfa.



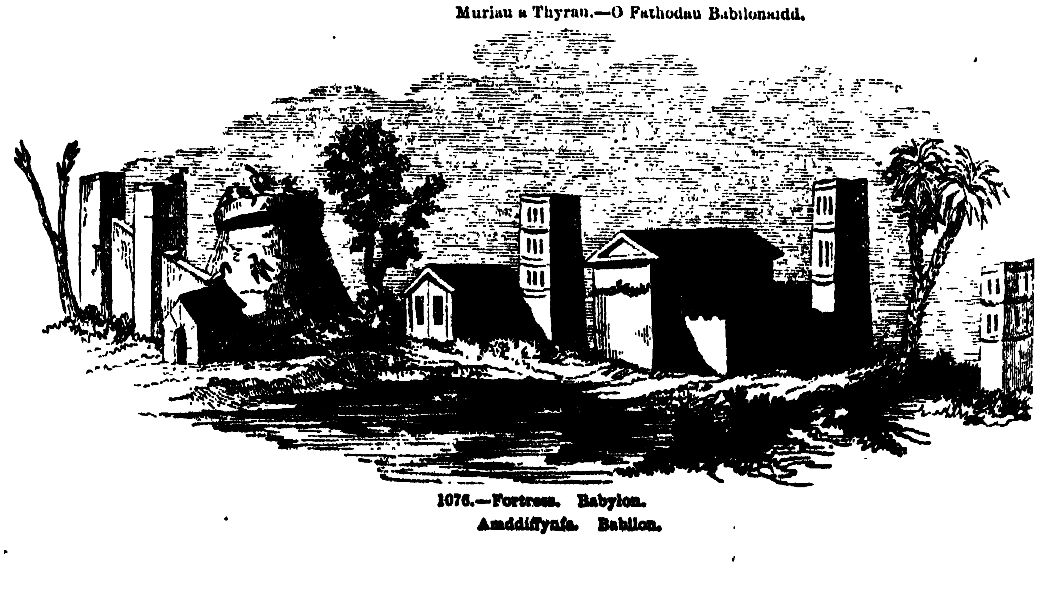
1073.—Fortress. Memphis.
Amddiffynfa.



1077.—Walls and Towers.—From Babylonian Coins.
Muriau a Thyrau.—O Fathodau Babilonaidd.



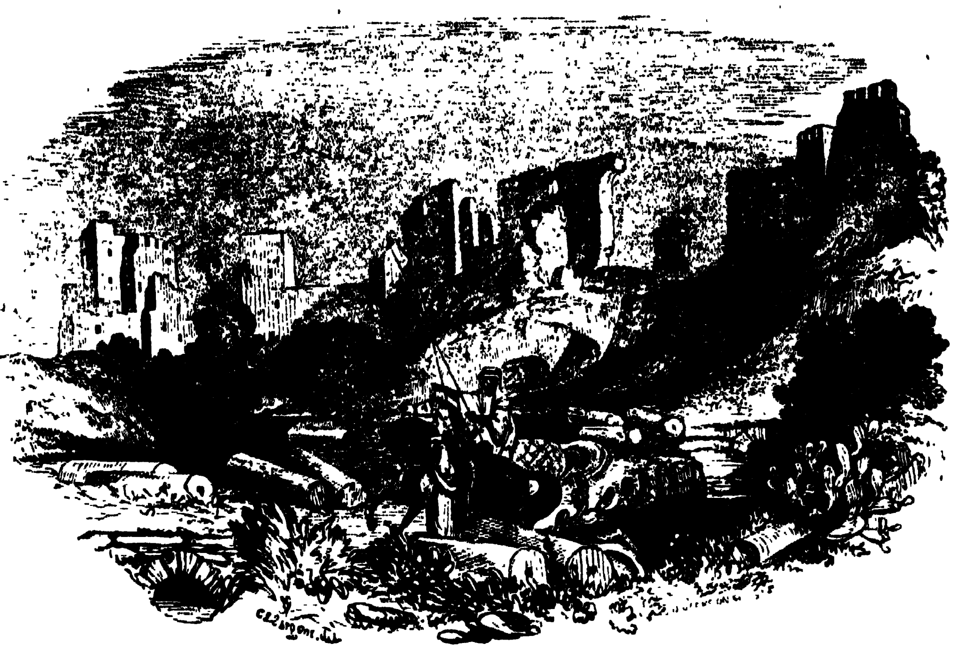
1075.—Fortress with Double Fosse.
Amddiffynfa âg iddi Wrthglawdd Dyblyg.



1076.—Fortress. Babylon.
Amddiffynfa. Babilon.



1078.—Syrian Altar.
Allor Syraidd.



1079.—Ascalon.



1080.—Nineveh.
Nineveh.



1081.—Joktheel.—A view of Petra, in Wady Mousa.
Joctheel.—Golygfa ar Petra, yn Wady Mousa.



1082.—Distant view of Lebanon.
Golygfa bellenig o Libanus.

there could scarcely be any barrier in the mind of the exiles to the most intimate amalgamation with the heathen nations.

We may now return to the kingdom of Judah, which was permitted to outlive, and might have profited by the downfal of, the sister kingdom.

Ahaz, the son of Jotham, was twenty years old when he ascended the throne. His government proved weak, and his character unsteady. He early manifested a degree of unmeasured predilection for idolatry, which had not before been witnessed in this kingdom. He apostatized not only to the idolatries of the neighbouring nations, but gave a share of his attention to the golden calves. Altars and images to various idols were set up in different parts of Jerusalem, and he adopted all the horrid rites with which their worship was celebrated. The Syrian idolatry seems to have been that which most engaged his admiration; for he introduced the idols and altars of that country, and altered the temple and its services after the model of those of Damascus. At length the sacred building was shut up altogether; and the profane king abandoned himself to his abominations without the restraint of the admonitions which the service of Jehovah imposed.

Pekah, who then reigned in Israel, perceived, and determined to take advantage of, the weakness which this course of conduct had brought upon the house of David. As already intimated, he invited Rezin, king of Syria, to join him in this enterprise; and as Judah was unprepared for a sudden attack, the confederates made an easy prey of the open towns towards the frontier, and returned laden with spoil to their own country. Exasperated at this unprovoked invasion, Ahaz got together all the forces he could command, and as soon as the combined armies had separated, marched against the Israelites, and, in the battle which ensued, met with a most complete and ruinous discomfiture—one hundred and twenty thousand of his bravest men were cut in pieces, two hundred thousand individuals, of both sexes and of every age, were taken prisoners, and were driven, together with a large quantity of plunder, by the conquerors to Samaria. On that day, so fatal to Judah, and, in the end, to Israel, Ahaz lost his eldest son, the heir of his throne; several of the most distinguished persons in the kingdom were also slain, and among them Azrikam, who was "next to the king." In the midst of these horrid scenes of unnatural warfare, one circumstance beams suddenly out in high relief, like a rainbow of peace in the troubled sky. When the captives of Judah arrived at Samaria, God moved the prophet Oded to intercede for them, and to protest against their being detained in bondage, or treated other than as brethren. So powerful was his pleading, that some of the chief men in the tribes stood forward and vowed that the prisoners should not enter the city as captives. They declared, truly, that more than sufficient wrong between brethren had already been committed—enough to draw down upon them the wrath of heaven—and that it behoved them to avoid adding so great a weight to the sum of their wrongdoing. The armed men, the triumphant warriors exulting in their spoil, were smitten to the soul by such words, and every man gave up cheerfully and willingly the captives he had taken, and the spoil belonging to them which he had won. Then the men who had bestirred themselves in this matter "rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and gave them to eat and drink, and anointed them, and carried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm-trees, to their brethren; then they returned to Samaria."

But the pride of Ahaz had been too deeply humbled, and his fears too sensibly awakened, for this lenity to move him from the desperate course on which he had resolved. This, as we have already intimated, consisted in procuring the aid of the Assyrians, at the expense of a costly subsidy and a voluntary vassalage. This assistance was readily granted; and the result, as it regards the kingdom of Israel, has already been related.

After having seen the humiliation of the kingdoms of Syria and of Israel—and in obtaining this result he had drained his own kingdom of its wealth, and reduced it to a state of dependence upon Assyria—Ahaz repaired to Damascus to pay his homage to the conqueror. Ahaz had now fallen into distress, and distress usually had worked well upon the kings of Judah, by weaning them from the evils by which their calamities were produced. But it was not so with Ahaz. His calamities only led him deeper into sin. At Damascus he beheld an altar which pleased his fancy; and concluding, probably, in the depth of his degradation, that the gods of the north were more favourable to their votaries than Jehovah had become to his people, he dared on his return to set up an altar after the same model at Jerusalem, and rendered worship thereat. In fact, the unhappy king may be regarded as having from this time entirely abandoned the national faith and devoted himself to the idols of Syria. No superstition was, indeed, too cruel for him. He offered incense in the valley of Hinnom, and made his own children pass through the fire to Moloch. Had he not been removed by death, there is every human probability that the temple of Jerusalem would have been desecrated and abandoned, a heathenish worship substituted for the rites of the Mosaical law, and the kingdom of Judah would have plunged into all the iniquities of Jeroboam and Ahab in the kingdom of Israel.

But the death of Ahaz, in 718 B.C., offered Judah a respite from the utter ruin which his downward course would have involved, and his excellent son Hezekiah soon held out the prospect of better and more peaceful days to the distracted kingdom. Hezekiah was twenty-five years old when he began to reign. It was soon seen that he was, like his pious ancestor King David, devotedly attached to the service of God, and well grounded in those principles of the theocratical institutions which had of late years been so much neglected or lost sight of even in Judah. He commenced the work of reformation as soon as he was advanced to the throne; and he not only removed all traces and monuments of idolatry throughout his dominions, but he suppressed the idolatrous worship upon high places, which had subsisted for many ages. One of his acts evinces a largeness of view and freedom from superstition which gives more insight into his character than almost anything which is recorded of him. The brazen serpent which Moses had made in the wilderness had always been preserved in the tabernacle and temple as an interesting relic, and a monument of God's ancient mercies towards the Hebrew people. But now, in these days of strong idolatrous tendency, the people began to look upon it with unseemly reverence, to which perhaps they were the more induced, by the practice of serpent-worship in the neighbouring countries. They were in great danger of turning it into a secondary idol; when the king, perceiving this inclination, decided, with great moral courage and just discrimination, to destroy this ancient memorial, rather than that it should be made an instrument of idolatry. One of the first acts of Hezekiah was to re-open the temple of the Lord, which his father had impiously shut up, and to restore the sacred services in all their ancient splendour as in the time of David. The priests and Levites, who had delayed assembling at Jerusalem to resume their duties, were affectionately invited by the good king to return to their respective offices, and were assured by him of his wish and intention to protect and support them. When a sufficient number of them had thus been brought to Jerusalem, they proceeded to purge the sanctuary of all the abominations by which during the preceding reign it had been polluted. When all things were ready, the king opened the solemn worship of God by offering innumerable sacrifices upon the too long neglected altar of Jehovah. However, as the death of Ahaz had taken place at the close of the year, and as, in consequence of the delay of the priests and Levites in assembling to resume their duties, the temple could not be properly prepared and sanctified in time to celebrate the Passover in the first month of the year ensuing, the king, upon consulting with the priests and elders, concluded that he should be justified in postponing this great celebration to the fourteenth day of the second month. Accordingly, messengers were sent to all parts of the kingdom to give notice of the arrangement, and to invite the people to take part in this almost forgotten festival. Similar notices and invitations were even sent into the land of Israel: and it speaks well for the character of Hoshea, who then reigned in Israel, that, if he did not promote the measure, he took no means to prevent his subjects from joining their brethren of Judah in this great solemnity. Thus, at the appointed time, Jerusalem was filled with a vast concourse of the subjects of both kingdoms, who, for the first time since the days of Solomon, united in one act of worship at the temple of the Lord, from which the ten tribes had so long been alienated. The people, as if to make amends for their past neglect of this interesting solemnity, doubled the usual time of its observance; it was thus kept up for fourteen days, during which a prodigious number of sacrifices were offered, attended with great festivity and rejoicing.

This grand commencement indicated very clearly the course which the new monarch intended to pursue; and it is highly to his honour, that throughout his long reign he swerved not to the right hand or to the left from the path of fidelity and righteousness which he thus early and publicly marked out for himself.

Such a man as Hezekiah must have contemplated with deep interest the events which soon after passed before his eyes in the neighbouring kingdom; and from the awful lesson which the righteous but terrible doom of that kingdom afforded, he would not fail to draw fresh motives for perseverance in the ways of righteousness.

SUNDAY XLIII.—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

THE first Macedonian city at which Paul stayed was Philippi, an important place which derived its name from its founder, Philip, the father of Alexander the Great, and which acquired celebrity from several battles being fought there during the civil wars of the Romans, particularly the great battle between Brutus and Antony, which decided the fate of the Roman empire. It was here that Brutus killed himself; and this is the Philippi to which Paul eventually wrote the epistle which bears its name.

The number of Jews at this place was not sufficient to enable them to establish a synagogue. Probably they were only proselytes from heathenism; and they had outside of the town, among the trees on the banks of the Strymon, a small place for prayer (*proseucha*), such as were used in the absence of a synagogue, and which appear to have had much resemblance to the analogous prayer-places of the Moslems. Paul repaired to this place the first Sabbath after his arrival, and addressed the women whom he found assembled there, with his usual impressiveness, respecting the things of Christ. His words strongly affected the heart of Lydia, a dealer in purple from the town of Thyatira, in Lydia; and at the conclusion of the day's service, she and her whole family were baptised by him; and he and his companions were constrained by her hospitable importunities to take up their abode in her house.

There was in Philippi a female slave, who, in a state resembling the phenomena of somnambulism, was accustomed to answer, unconsciously, questions proposed to her, and was regarded as possessed by the Pythian Apollo, or as a prophetess inspired by him when the *afflatus* came upon her. She had then, and afterwards, frequent opportunities of hearing Paul, and his words made an impression upon her mind. In her convulsive fits these impressions were revived, and, mingling what she had heard from Paul with her own heathenish notions, she frequently followed him and his companions when on their way to the place of prayer, crying out, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who show unto us the way of salvation!" This testimony from a woman supposed to be inspired was calculated to draw the attention of the people to the new doctrine. But it was far from the temper of Paul to avail himself, or even to endure, a testimony which, although true, was rendered impure by the medium through which it passed. At first he took no notice of her: but at length he turned to her, and in the name of Jesus commanded the spirit which held her powers in bondage to depart from her. The masters of the woman had driven a thriving trade by the largesses which they received from those who desired to obtain the benefit of her oracular responses; and seeing all their gains cut off by her cure, their rage against the strangers became boundless, and they seized upon Paul and Silas, and haled them before the magistrates of the place. Before this tribunal they accused them, not immediately of their own grievance, which would have rendered their *animus* too transparent, but as turbulent Jews, who were attempting to introduce into the place religious practices contrary to the Roman laws. This charge roused the multitude against these holy men; and the magistrates, without hearing the matter further at present, directed them to be publicly scourged, and then sent them to the town prison, probably with the view of punishing them on a future day according to the forms of law. The smart of the lash, the gloom of the prison, the painful confinement of the stocks in which their feet were fastened, and the expectation of suffering and wrong which lay before them, could not depress their souls—nay, rather their hearts exulted in the consciousness that they suffered in the cause of Christ—and even at midnight they gave vent to their feelings in singing the praises of God.

As they were thus employed, the place was shaken by an earthquake to its very foundation, so that every door was burst open, and the bonds of every one fell from him. The governor of the prison being thus awakened suddenly from his sleep, and finding all the prison doors wide open, concluded that the prisoners, for whose safe keeping he was responsible, had made their escape; and, in his agitation and alarm, drew his sword with intent to destroy himself therewith. This resource to a man from dangers which he could not escape was approved by the philosophy of the time, and was recommended to the heathen by many eminent examples: but, happily, the jailer of Philippi was spared from it; as Paul and Silas calmed his fears, by calling out, "Do thyself no harm, for we are all here!" The earthquake, which gave them the opportunity to escape, their neglect to avail themselves of the opportunity—made them appear as something more than men to the relieved jailer. "He called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas: and besought them and said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?'" That momentous question was answered, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Gladly did the apostles avail themselves of this opening to declare the great message with which they were charged,—and to bring light and gladness to their prison walls. The jailer and his household received that light into their souls, and were gladdened by it. They were baptised without delay; and the jailer brought them to his private residence, bathed their stiffening stripes, and caused food to be placed before them.

The next morning early the magistrates sent the lictors to the jailer, enjoining him to let his prisoners depart. But having been ignominiously whipped the preceding day, Paul thought that it became him to assert the civil privileges which belonged to him as a citizen of Rome; and he and Silas (who must also have been in possession of the Roman citizenship) refused to leave the prison unless the magistrates came in person to release them, in attestation of their innocence. So alarmed were the Duumvirs at having committed the high crime of subjecting Roman citizens to the scourge, that they came and conducted them out of the prison. They had intimated a wish that Paul and Silas should leave the city: with which they thought proper to comply, after they had visited the house of Lydia, and imparted some final comfort and encouragement to their friends. Luke and Timothy, who had not been involved in the recent tumult, remained behind, but afterwards rejoined their party—Timothy at Thessalonica, or Berœa, and Luke at a later period. The Church which was thus formed at Philippi continued to entertain the most affectionate attachment to Paul, which they evinced by sending contributions for his maintenance, although he was by no means prone to seek such gifts from his converts, but often chose rather to labour with his hands for a subsistence than be suspected of interested motives.

From Philippi Paul and Silas proceeded to Thessalonica, about twenty miles distant, the largest city in Macedonia, and a place of considerable traffic, where many Jews resided. Here they found a synagogue, which for three weeks Paul visited on the Sabbath days. The Jews were obstinate: but many of the "devout Greeks"—who in dissatisfaction with their native idolatries had become proselytes to the Jewish religion—rejoiced in the glad tidings which he brought, and found in the doctrine of Christ a firmer and happier resting-point for their troubled minds than Judaism offered. "Chief women, not a few"—that, is, women connected with families of rank and influence in the place—are specially mentioned among those who were favourably affected by the preaching of the apostle. The same had happened on other occasions, as at Antioch in Pisidia (Acts xiii. 50), and, more recently, at Philippi: and perhaps we may conclude from such instances, which are probably but examples of many other cases not specified, that women of this class and character bore a more important part, and exercised a more important influence in the early propagation of the Gospel, than they have had credit for. At a subsequent period Paul wrote two epistles to the church which he founded in Thessalonica; and from that we learn that he was not long content with addressing the proselytes only once a week at the meetings of the synagogue, where his preaching would have been confined to the small number of the Gentiles who had joined the Jews in their worship, and where also he was obliged to adopt such a method and form of address as was suited to the peculiar condition of the Jews. He availed himself of all openings and opportunities for making the Gospel known in the city; and ere long those Gentiles whose attention had been awakened by the proselytes assembled in various places to hear the apostle, and from them chiefly was formed that body of Christians which, as Paul himself testifies, became "ensamples to all them that believe in Macedonia and Achaia." From the epistles another interesting point transpires. It was a custom among the Jews that all their sons should learn a manual craft of some kind or other. Even those whose circumstances suggested no probability that their sons would ever need this provision against the changes of life, deemed it criminal to neglect this mode of securing to them a means of support. Under this view Paul had been taught the trade of a tent-maker; and he now found good use of the attainment. Being now cut off from the resources which his birth and connexions opened to him, he had but two alternatives—either to subsist on the bounty of the converts, or to work for his maintenance.



1083.—Apollo Belvedere.



1084.—Roman Lictor.
Ceisiad Rhufeinaidd.



1085.—Prayer Hut.
Bwth Gweddio.



1086.—View of Athens.
Golygfa ar Athen.



1087.—Thyatira.



1088.—Instruction. (Jouvenet.)
Hyfforddiad.



1089.—Justice. (Reynolds.)
Cyfiawnder.



1090.—Education. (Raffaelle.)
Addysg.



1091.—Temperance. (Reynolds.)
Cymmedroldeb.



1092.—Prudence. (Reynolds.)
Callineb.

SUNDAY XLIV.—PROVERBS.

THE Proverbs, as we are informed at the beginning and in other parts of the book, were written by Solomon, king of Israel; and that he was the author of by far the greater portion of the proverbs which the book contains, is admitted even by those who allege that the final chapters contain a supplement, the authorship of which must be ascribed to other writers. We are informed in Scripture that this wisest of kings, being desirous of employing, for the benefit of mankind, the wisdom which it had pleased God to bestow upon him, composed various works for their instruction; and these works doubtless did much in their day to form and advance the Hebrew mind in the various branches of knowledge to which they belonged. They had thus an important use, and served the purpose to which they were directed; and although it would be curious and interesting to possess all the works of this ancient sage, we have the less reason to regret that the present book, and, as most think, the Canticles and the Book of Ecclesiastes, are all that remain of the various works of him who is related to have spoken "three thousand proverbs;" whose "songs were a thousand and five;" and who "spake of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall;" and who "spake also of beasts, and of fowls, and of creeping things, and of fishes" (1 Kings iv. 32). The greater portion of these works was probably not admitted into the sacred canon on account of their not being designed for religious instruction, or not being regarded as emanations of those higher inspirations which the books accounted sacred embody. In the possession of Solomon's doctrinal and moral works, we may be consoled for the loss of his physical and philosophical productions; and enough happily remains to bear evidence of the exalted wisdom which the Scripture ascribes to their author.

This book of Proverbs, then, contains the maxims of long experience, framed by one who was well qualified, by his rare gifts and talents, to draw just lessons from a comprehensive survey of human life. "His proverbs," says Bishop Gray, "are justly founded on principles of human nature, and so adapted to the permanent interests of men that they agree with the manners of every age, and may be assumed as rules for the direction of our conduct in every condition and rank of life, however varied in its complexion or diversified by circumstances; they embrace not only the concerns of private morality, but the great objects of political importance. Subsequent moralists have, in their discourses on œcumenical prudence, done little more than dilate on the precepts and comment on the wisdom of Solomon. Grotius, extensive as were his own powers, was unable to conceive that the book of Proverbs could be the work of one man, and supposes it to have been a collection of the finest proverbs of the age (much in the same manner as those published by some of the emperors of Constantinople in subsequent times), and perfected from various collections by Hezekiah; but this opinion, founded in part on some Rabbinical accounts, cannot be allowed to invalidate the exclusive claim of Solomon to what is usually ascribed to him. The work might perhaps comprise part of the three thousand proverbs which Solomon is described to have uttered, being probably digested as far as the twenty-fifth chapter by that monarch himself, and afterwards received into the canon with some additions."

The proverbs which are included between the twenty-fifth and thirtieth chapters are supposed to have been selected from a much greater number by "the men of Hezekiah." These proverbs, indeed, bear internal evidence of being selected by some collectors after the time of Solomon, as they repeat some which had already been introduced in the former part of the book. The thirtieth chapter is occupied by the prudent admonitions which Agur, the son of Jakeh, delivered to his pupils, Ithiel and Ucal; and this is followed, in the thirty-first chapter, by the precepts which the mother of Lemuel delivered to her son. With respect to these personages different opinions are entertained. The old commentators usually supposed that Solomon himself is described under the name of Agur: but no satisfactory reason can be assigned for his assuming the name; and it is now more generally believed that Agur was an inspired writer whose moral and proverbial sentences were by "the men of Hezekiah" added to those of the Wise Man on account of the conformity of their matter. It is perhaps meant that by Lemuel we should understand Solomon: but if we find difficulties in this conclusion, the dignity of the book is not affected if we suppose the last chapter to have been written by a different hand, and admit the mother of Lemuel to have been a Jewish woman married to some neighbouring prince, or Abiah, the daughter of the high-priest Zechariah, and mother of King Hezekiah.

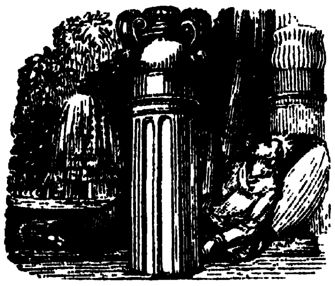
Bishop Louth describes well the condition of intellectual culture under which proverbs become the most acceptable and suitable medium for the inculcating of morality and the teachings of wisdom:—"In those periods of remote antiquity, which may with propriety be called the infancy of societies and nations, the usual, if not the only, mode of instruction was by proverbs. Human wisdom was then indeed in a rude and unfinished state: it was not digested, methodized, or reduced to order and connexion. Those who by genius and reflection, exercised in the school of experience, had acquired a stock of knowledge, were desirous of reducing it into the most compendious form, and comprised in a few maxims those observations which they apprehended most essential to human happiness. This mode of instruction was in truth more likely than any other to prove efficacious with men in a rude state of society; for it professed not to dispute, but to command—not to persuade, but to compel; it conducted them not by a circuit of argument, but led immediately to the approbation and practice of integrity and virtue. That it might not, however, be altogether destitute of allurement, and lest it should disgust by an appearance of roughness and severity, some degree of amusement became necessary; and the instructors of mankind added to their compositions the graces of harmony, and illustrated them by metaphors, comparisons, allusions, and other embellishments of style. This manner, which with other nations prevailed only during the first period of civilization, with the Hebrews continued to be a favourite style to the latest ages of their literature."

This indeed is true of other Oriental nations, who have retained an attachment to this mode of instruction, long after they have come to the point of arranging their knowledge into digested systems. The Chinese, for instance, and the Persians, retain their partiality for proverbs, although they are not wanting in works in which "wisdom is digested, methodized, and reduced to order and connexion." In the 'Mémoires sur les Chinois' there is a large collection of proverbs, which are in general character very similar to the Proverbs of Solomon—although, of course, deficient in that higher wisdom by which the latter are informed. Burckhardt has also given us a collection of Arabic proverbs, with a commentary, many of which convey the same illustrations of the usages of the people which we find in the sacred book of Proverbs. In fact, it is necessary, to be thoroughly acquainted with the physical and intellectual condition of a people, to understand their proverbs well; and he who has acquired this by diligent study, will best understand and most entirely enjoy the Proverbs of Solomon. As Burckhardt's book is not common, the reader will not be displeased to see a few specimens of the proverbs which it contains:—

"Rather be sacrificed with an axe than require favours from others.
Work (were it only) for a single grain, and reckon up the profits of him who does nothing.
Follow the owl: she will lead thee to a ruined place.
The corn passes from hand to hand, but comes at last to the mill.
A well from which thou drinkest, throw not a stone into it.
The value of every man consists in what he does well.
Advice given in the midst of a crowd is loathsome.
A day that is not thine own, do not reckon it as of thy life.
On the day of victory no fatigue is felt.
Be diligent, and God will send profit.
How many are the roads that lead not to the heart!
Him whom goodness cannot mend, evil will not mend.
The soil of labour rather than the saffron of indolence.
Those are the best riches which are spent in the proper place.
God bless him who pays visits, and short visits!
A tree that affords thee shade, do not order it to be cut down.
In every head is some wisdom."

It will be seen that in these proverbs the chief formal difference between them and those of Solomon lies in the absence of that bi-membral antithesis which has already (pp. 258, 274) been indicated as a characteristic of the latter. The former, for the most part, consists of two sentences joined in a kind of antithesis—the second being sometimes a reduplication, sometimes an explanation, and sometimes an opposition in the sense to the first.

SUNDAY XLIV.—BIBLE HISTORY.



N these paths of righteousness Hezekiah found prosperity and peace, during and after the very time which brought ruin upon the sister kingdom. He more than repaired the losses of power and dominion which the kingdom had sustained in the lifetime of his father. The Philistines were not constrained to relinquish the positions which they had taken from Ahaz, but were dispossessed of all their own territories, except those of Gaza and Gath. Thus was Hezekiah "magnified in the sight of all nations, and many brought gifts unto the Lord in Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah, king of Judah."

The king of Judah was at length encouraged by this prosperity to withhold the heavy tribute which his father had agreed to pay to the Assyrians. As he took this bold step, when the Assyrians were too much engaged elsewhere to attend to him, he did not immediately experience its full consequences. At length, however, Shalmaneser died, and was succeeded by his son Sennacherib, who very soon invaded the kingdom with a great army, with the full intention of reducing Judah to the same condition to which the land of Israel had been reduced by his father. He subdued the whole country with little difficulty, as Hezekiah deemed himself unable to meet him in the field; and Jerusalem itself being threatened with a siege, the king of Judah at length sent to Sennacherib, who was then besieging Lachish, humbly acknowledging his offence, and offering to submit to the conditions which the Assyrians might think proper to impose. The desire of Sennacherib to proceed against Egypt, which formed his ulterior object, made him willing to listen to this application; and he demanded three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold; and this was paid by Hezekiah, although to raise it he was constrained to exhaust the royal and the sacred treasures, and even to strip off the gold with which the doors and pillars of the temple were overlaid.

It is difficult to appreciate the motives of Hezekiah in withholding his tribute to the Assyrians, by which all this had been brought about. He could scarcely have expected to maintain his independence unassisted against all the might of the Assyrian empire, although his success in his operations against the neighbouring nations may have had some influence upon his determination. If the only assistance he expected was from the God he served, he ought, under the old principles of the theocracy, to have taken the field without regard to numbers, trusting to the Divine King for victory; but his course of proceeding justifies us in supposing, as the Assyrians themselves believed, that he calculated on support from Egypt. He had perhaps been promised this support; but the change of policy consequent upon the death of So and the accession of Sethos, rendered the Egyptians unable, even if willing, to march to his relief, and left him no alternative but submission to Sennacherib, which he reluctantly tendered.

Sennacherib received the treasure of Hezekiah; but after he had taken Ashdod, one of the keys of Egypt, he began to think that it would be imprudent to have the power of Judah essentially unbroken in the rear. He therefore determined to complete the subjugation of Judah in the first place—and his recent observations, with the humble submission of Hezekiah, could not lead him to expect much delay or difficulty in the enterprise. He soon reduced all the places before which he appeared, except Libnah and Lachish, and except Jerusalem, to which he sent his general Rabshakeh, with a very haughty summons to surrender. Considering the power of the god of a nation as represented by that of the nation which worshipped him, many most disparaging and painful expressions were applied by this heathen general to Jehovah, comparing him with the idols worshipped by the numerous nations which the Assyrians had subdued. This engaged the honour of God in his defence of Hezekiah, and he was encouraged to expect a very speedy and surprising deliverance. Isaiah the prophet was sent to him with the assurance—"Lo, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land, and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land." The rumour by which Sennacherib was alarmed and interrupted, was no other than the report which was spread abroad that Tirhakah, the Ethiopian king of Upper Egypt, was marching with an immense army to cut off his retreat. He then determined to withdraw; but he first sent a boastful and insulting letter to Hezekiah, defying the God of Israel, and threatening what destruction he would execute upon the nation when he returned. But that very night, an immense proportion of the Assyrian host, even one hundred and eighty thousand men, were smitten by the blast which the prophet had foretold, and which has with great probability been ascribed to the agency of the Simoom, a hot pestilential south-wind, which has been noticed in another part of this work (p. 468). Sennacherib, being unable to meet Tirhakah with the shattered remains of his army, returned to Nineveh, where in the exasperation of his overthrow and loss he behaved with great severity to the captive Israelites. But his career was soon closed; for fifty-two days after his return he was slain, while worshipping in the house of the god Nisroch, by his two eldest sons. Thus was the prophecy of Isaiah in every point accomplished. The parricides fled into Armenia, leaving the throne open to their younger brother, whose name was Esarhaddon. These blows so weakened the Assyrian monarchy, as not only to relieve Hezekiah from his apprehensions, but enabled the Babylonians and the Medes to assert their independence.

Shortly after the deliverance which has been related, Hezekiah fell sick, and was warned by the prophet Isaiah:—"Set thy house in order; for thou shalt die and not live." This was heavy tidings for the king, not only from the horror of immature death which all Israelites entertained, but also because he had no son to succeed him on the throne. Therefore, as he lay on his bed, he turned his face to the wall, and prayed earnestly that this doom might pass from him. And his prayer was heard; for the prophet had scarcely reached the outer court, when he was sent back to announce that in answer to it fifteen years should be added to his life and reign, and that on the third day he should resume his usual attendance at the temple. This seemed so strange and prodigious a thing to the king, that he required some assurance on which his mind might rest. The prophet proposed a test which Hezekiah himself would not have dared to ask. It was offered to his option whether the shadow should go backward ten degrees, or forward ten degrees, on "the dial of Ahaz." He chose the former; and accordingly the prophet "cried unto the Lord, and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward by which it had gone down on the dial of Ahaz."

There has been no small amount of discussion regarding this transaction, partly with reference to the dial, and partly to the miracle itself. It is the most ancient mention of a dial on record, and every kind of ancient dial has been produced in illustration. These are various, as may be perceived by the engravings, which throw much light upon the nature of ancient dials, but not much upon the particular subject before us. The word translated "degrees" means literally "steps," whence some have thought that it was some tall pile, like the Observatory at Delhi, with an ascent of steps, and forming the gnomon, which threw its shadows upon the area, or upon walls properly marked out for the purpose. This is in fact the use of the structure at Delhi, an interesting account of which is given in the 'Penny Magazine,' No. 525. This is, however, a matter which seems not likely to be ever settled beyond controversy. For the rest, it is asked, how was the retraction of the shadow upon the dial of Ahaz produced? There was doubtless a miracle, seeing that the choice of evidence was given to Hezekiah; but the question is, in what manner—through what agency—this miracle was performed. We observe throughout the Bible that God does very great miracles only for very great ends, or when there is only one mode of realizing the result to be produced. If it had pleased Him, the course of the great globe might have been reversed to satisfy the king of Judah; but as there are less stupendous manifestations of Divine power—manifestations more commensurate with the designed effect, and causing less derangement to the course of nature—we are almost bound to conclude that they were resorted to on this occasion.

This circumstance, with the miraculous overthrow of the Assyrians, made a strong impression on the people, and probably went far in curing the idolatrous predilections which had been fostered during the reign of Ahaz. To this we may also in part attribute the embassy which Hezekiah received from Merodach Baladan, the king of Babylon, although this may be primarily ascribed to the desire of this monarch, who had thrown off the yoke of Assyria, to establish a good understanding with a monarch whose position, with regard to that empire, resembled his own. Since the time of Solomon, no embassy from so distant a region had been seen in Jerusalem; and Hezekiah felt much flattered by the respect and honour which it implied. He took great pains to magnify his importance, and to let the strangers see that he was really entitled to all the attention he had received from their master. He displayed to them his treasures, his rarities, his arsenals, his establishments—he was at the very summit of self-exaltation when



1093.—Sculpture of the Captivity in Persia, from Sir R. K. Porter.
Cerfiad o'r Caethion yn Persia, o Syr R. K. Porter.

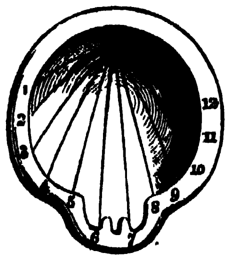


Fig. 1094.

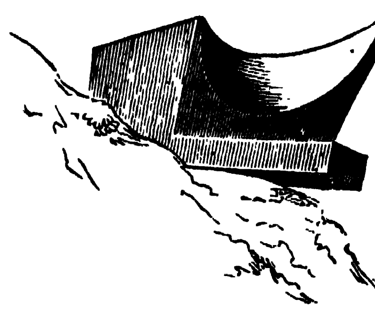
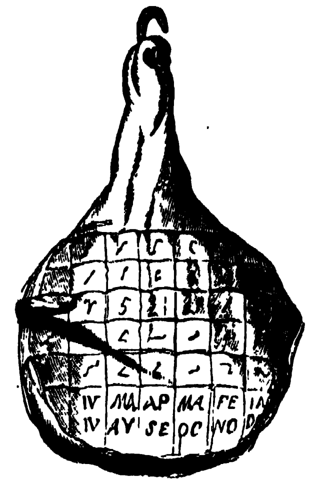


Fig. 1095.



1098.—Ancient Portable Sun-dial.
Hen Haul-ddeial Symmudol.

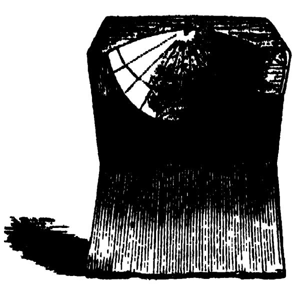


Fig. 1096.

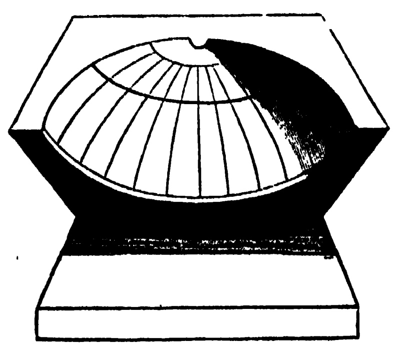
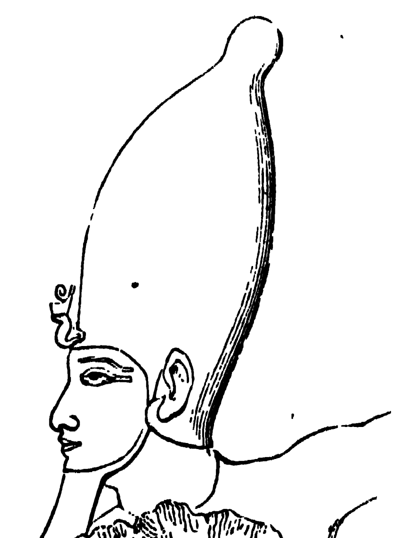
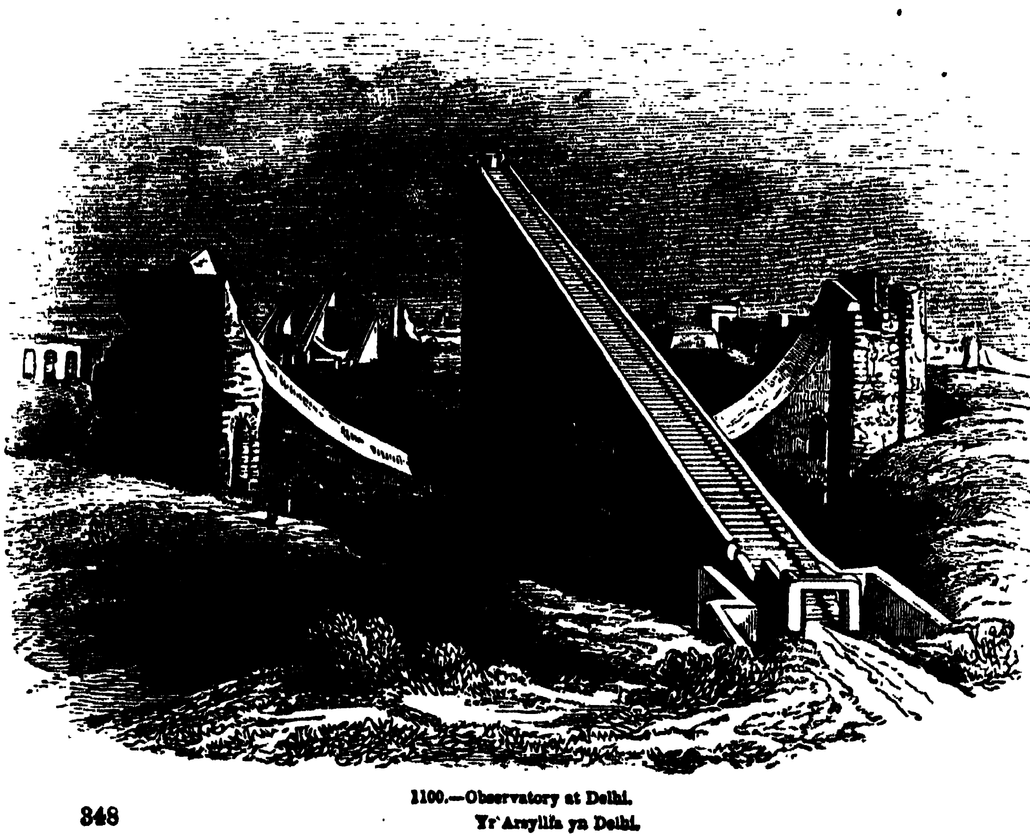


Fig. 1097.

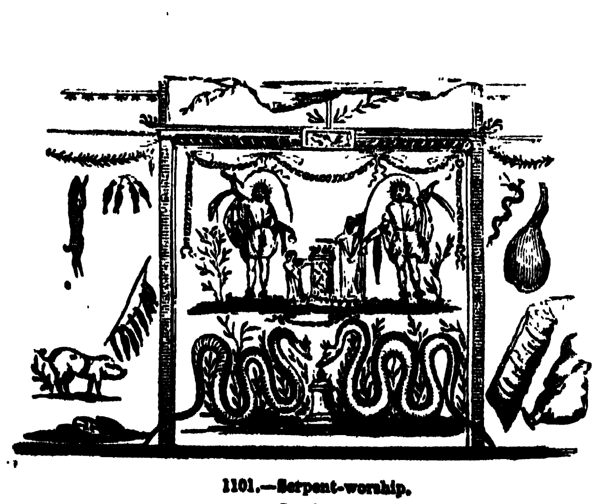
1094 to 1097.—Ancient Sun-dials.
Hen Haul-ddeialau.



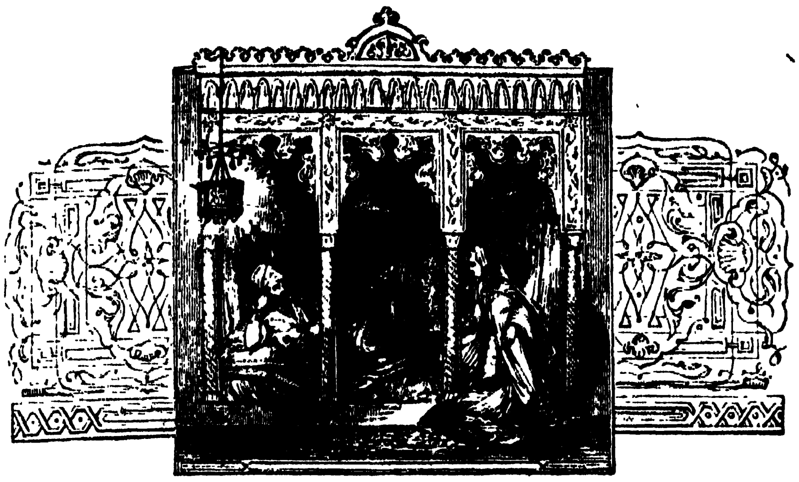
1099.—Tirhakah.

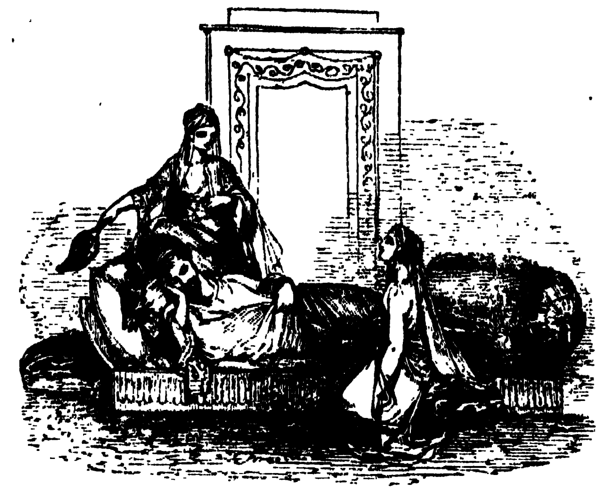


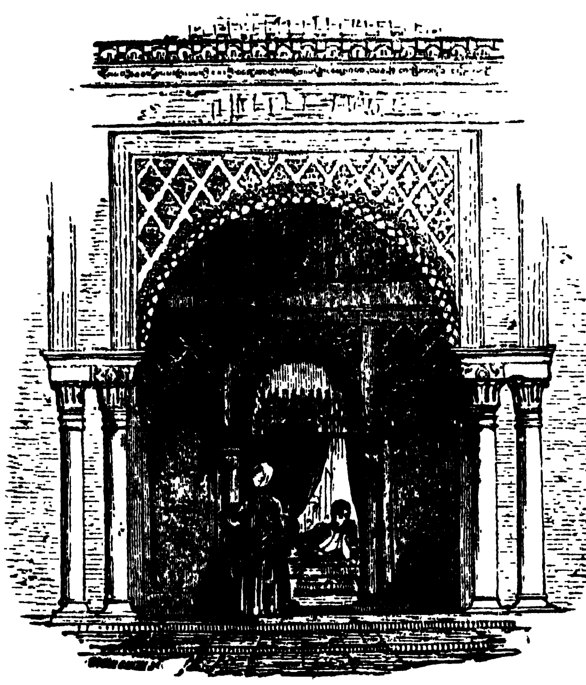
1100.—Observatory at Delhi.
Yr Arsyllfa yn Delhi.



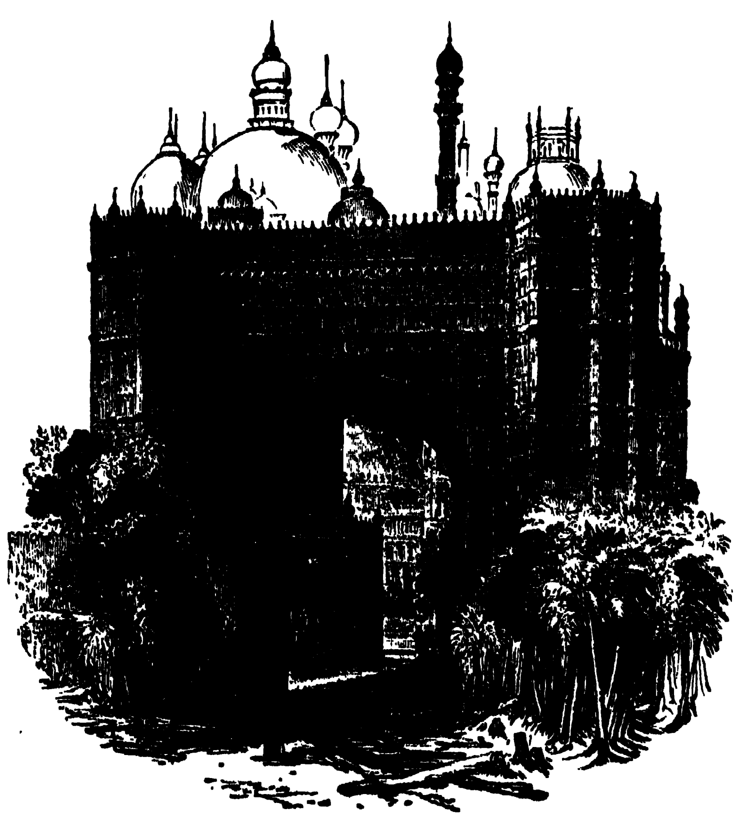
1101.—Serpent-worship.
Sarph-addoliad.


1102.—King in Bed.
Brenin mewn Gwely.


1103.—King Reposing.
Brenin yn Gorphwyso.


1104.—Bed-chamber of King.
Ystafell-wely Brenin.


1105.—King on his Couch.
Brenin ar ei Lwth.


1106.—Oriental Palace.
Palas Dwyreiniol.


1107.—Sand-storm.
Ystôrm o Dywod.

he was suddenly cast down by the appearance of the prophet Isaiah, who asked him what he had shown to the strangers. The king ingenuously acknowledged that there was nothing in his palace or among his treasures that he had not displayed before them; on which the prophet uttered the chilling oracle, "Behold the days come that all that is in thine house, and all that thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried unto Babylon; nothing shall be left, saith the Lord." This must have damped his exalted spirits much; but as he understood that these evils were not to come to pass in his own days, he abstained from giving way to his grief.

Hezekiah enjoyed prosperity and peace during the fifteen years which were added to his life, the best proof of which is found in the fact that the historian has no further events during this period to record. It is indeed intimated that the reign of Hezekiah was not undistinguished by public works of importance to his kingdom, and more especially important to Jerusalem. At the time when the discontinuance of his tribute to the Assyrians led him to expect that their armies would be one day turned against him, he not only strengthened the fortifications, but was induced to turn, by subterranean channels, into the town the waters which had previously been open outside its walls. For this he had two objects—that a besieging enemy might be distressed for want of water, and that the inhabitants of the town might at the same time be more abundantly supplied. This policy seems to have been successful; for we never, in the subsequent history of the holy city, read of the inhabitants suffering from thirst during a siege, although often famishing with hunger; while, on the other hand, the besiegers have often been reduced to the most dire extremities for want of water.

When the fifteen years had expired, Hezekiah was "gathered to his fathers" (B.C. 689), after having reigned twenty-nine years and lived fifty-four. If this king had died fifteen years before, he would have left no son, for his son Manasseh was only twelve years old when his father died; and it would have been better for Judah that he should have died childless than to leave a son who took delight in undoing all the good of his father's reign—and such was Manasseh.

This prince was on his accession unfortunately soon surrounded by princes and courtiers friendly to idolatry, and opposed to the reformations which the late king had taken so much pains to accomplish. They were not slow to perceive that their return to power depended upon the degree of influence which they might be enabled to establish over the mind of the young king; while the friends of the established institutions felt perhaps too secure in their position to hold a proper guard against the machinations of their invidious opponents. The latter, by flattering and humouring Manasseh, succeeded in training him to rely upon them, and to concur in their wishes. In the end, he probably went further than his leaders intended; for he proved the most impious and wicked king that had ever reigned either in Jerusalem or Samaria. He not only restored the idolatries of his grandfather Ahaz, but he totally suppressed the worship of Jehovah, converting the temple into a house of Baal, by placing altars dedicated to that idol in its courts, and setting up his image in the very sanctuary of God. He filled his dominions with high places, groves, and altars consecrated to the service of Baalim, and caused his children to pass through the fire to Moloch. The nation, too, readily falling in with the king's designs and wishes, both to obtain his favour and to gratify their own corrupt inclinations, hastened to introduce every kind of idolatry practised by the surrounding nations; and proceeded to such excess of wickedness, that they became more corrupt and abandoned than the ancient Canaanites, who had been driven from the land to make room for their fathers. Prophets were in mercy sent to reprove the infatuated king, and call him to repentance; but their rebukes and opposition only roused his anger, and he caused several of them to be put to death. The venerable Isaiah, who had prophesied in Judah ever since the year that king Uzziah died, is generally believed by the Jews to have been among the victims of his wrath. God at length made known, by one of the prophets, the full extent of his anger against this guilty king and apostate generation, and declared that he would "bring such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth it both his ears shall tingle, because they had done that which was evil in his sight to provoke him to anger."

While these things took place in Judah, Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, was making great efforts to reunite the broken fragments of his father's empire. It gave him much trouble to reduce the revolted province of Babylon to its former subjection; but having at length succeeded in his object, he turned his attention westward, and determined to restore his authority in that quarter, and avenge the defeat and loss which the Assyrians had formerly sustained in Palestine. This intention made him the unwitting executioner of the Divine wrath which had gone forth against Manasseh and his kingdom. He entered Judah in great force, defeated Manasseh in battle, took him alive, and sent him away in chains to Babylon, together with many of the nobles and of the people. They were sent thither probably because Esarhaddon, to prevent another defection, had resolved to make that city his royal residence. It was probably on this occasion that he removed the principal of the remaining inhabitants of Israel, as already mentioned, and replaced them by more colonies from the East.

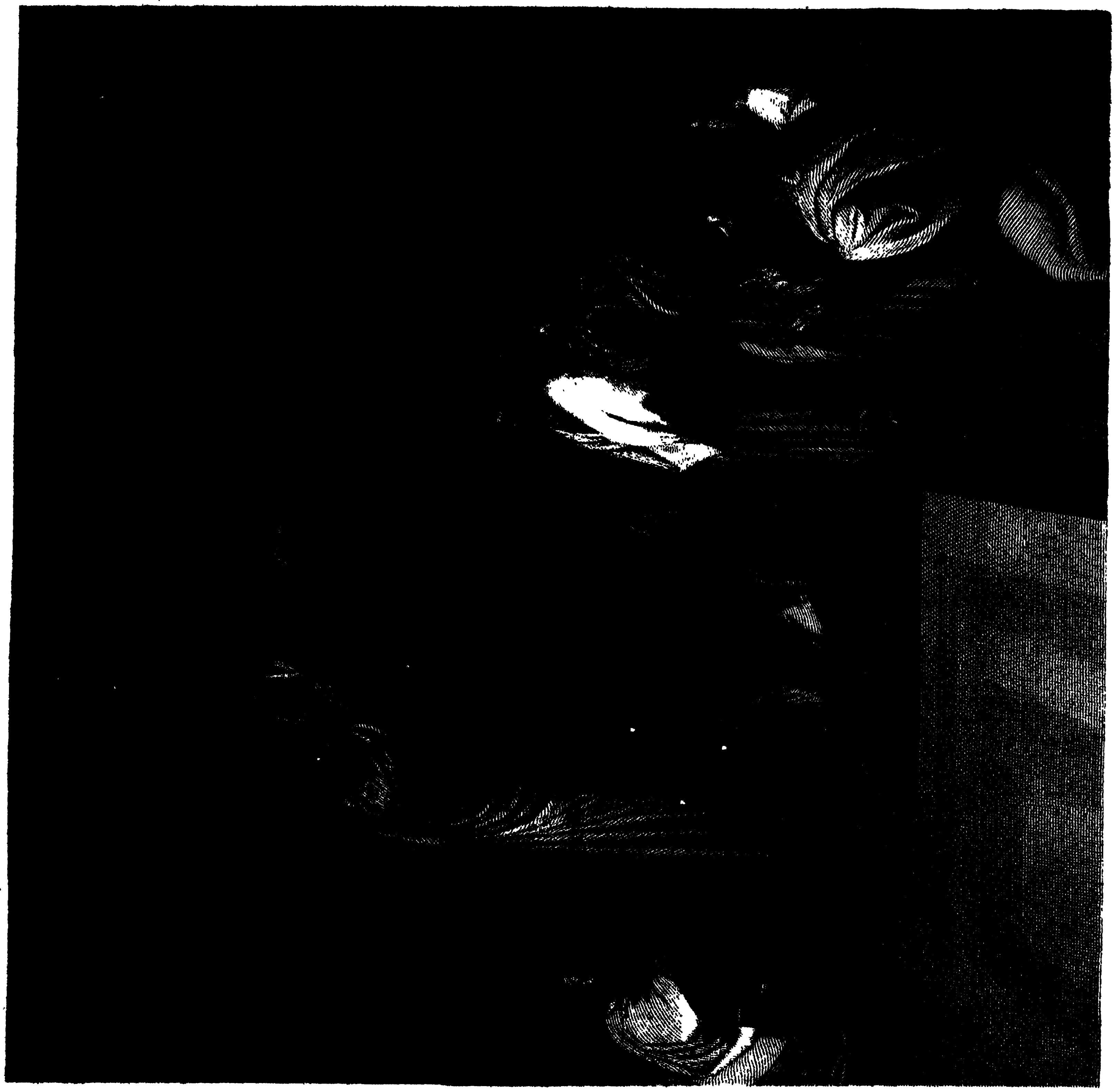
The King of Judah, thus deprived of his power and even his liberty, in chains and in a prison, with no other prospect than that of thus miserably ending his days, had ample leisure to review his past life, and discover the error of his ways. He called to mind the piety of his father, and the prosperity and success by which it had been attended; and when he contrasted this with the misery which flowed from his own misconduct, he was filled with remorse, and in the most heartfelt repentance "he besought the Lord his God" for mercy and deliverance, and "humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers." And God had mercy upon him, and inclined the heart of Esarhaddon to restore him to his liberty and his kingdom. The impression made upon Manasseh by these events was deep and abiding. On his return to Jerusalem, he immediately proceeded to suppress all the idolatries which he had formerly been at so much pains to establish. He revived the worship of the Lord in its ancient dignity; and by the influence of his authority and example, the nation became once more reformed, and obedient to the law of God. This people were always prone to follow the example of their princes, and the nation was therefore greatly advantaged by the excellent example which Manasseh continued to set before them to the end of his days. He died B.C. 634, after a long reign of fifty-five years; and, notwithstanding the merits of his latter days, the general estimate of his reign was marked by his being refused a place in the sepulchre of the kings; so that he was buried in the garden of his own house.

Amon had been born and brought up during the latter portion of his father's reign, yet the first ways of Manasseh, and not the last, were those which he chose to follow. He hastened to revive the idolatries which had been suppressed, and to encourage all the abomination of heathenism. But his career was cut short by a conspiracy, after a reign of only two years; and he left the throne to his son Josiah, then a boy of only eight years old.

This young prince was fortunately intrusted, during his minority, to the care of persons who were averse to idolatry, and favourably disposed to the worship of Jehovah and the observance of the law. He profited well from the instructions of such teachers, and proved a truly excellent and pious prince, disposed to square his public conduct by the example of the faith and zeal of his ancestor David. After a minority of eight years, during which the government seems to have been administered by a guardian or regent, the king assumed the responsible duties of government.

In the same year the young king gave manifest tokens of the policy and faith by which he intended to govern his course, by commencing the reform of the idolatries which had again become conspicuous in Judah; and in the twelfth year of his reign, when he was twenty years old, and more fully acquainted with the duties of his high place, he resumed his great work with firm and steady purpose, and proceeded to uproot even those monuments and instruments of evil which no other king had spared. With zeal so ardent, and a hand so unsparing, exercised during the course of a long reign, it can only be ascribed to the utter degeneracy of the people that his measures had not that permanent effect which they were designed to accomplish and which might yet have averted from Judah the doom of her sister Israel.

In the course of six years the king made considerable progress in destroying the idols and fragments of idolatry with which the land of Judah, and Jerusalem in particular, had become filled to an inconceivable degree. While the priests and Levites were occupied in cleansing and purifying the house of God from the pollutions of the preceding reigns, Hilkiah, the high-priest, discovered in an obscure part of the temple the sacred volume of the law. This appears to have been the original book of the law, which was deposited by Moses in the side of the ark, and which in those distracted times had either been removed by the pious for concealment, that it might not be destroyed by the idolaters, or had been cast out by those by whom everything sacred had been profaned. Hilkiah sending this book to Josiah, by Shaphan, the scribe, the king, who seems to have been ignorant of its existence, directed him to read it.



SUNDAY XLIV.—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

OUR Apostle acted in this matter according to the circumstances. He accepted freely what was freely offered; or if on any occasion he suspected that his motives might be misconstrued, he chose rather to work night and day, to provide not only for his own wants, but for those of his companions—availing himself of such opportunities of declaring the Gospel as the incidents and intervals of labour offered. This he did at Thessalonica. "Ye remember, brethren," he says, "our labour and travail; for, labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable to any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of Christ" (1 Thess. ii. 9). The speedy and cordial reception which the Gospel met with among the Gentiles of this place soon roused the indignation and anger of the Jews. They had themselves little power in a heathen city: but by their misrepresentations of the character and objects of the apostolical party, they stirred up some of the common people, who forced their way into the house of Jason, a Christian, with whom Paul was staying. Not finding the Apostle, they dragged Jason himself and those who were with him before the judgment-seat.

The accusation here rendered was different from the usual one, but was well calculated to gain the attention of the magistrates and was chosen for that reason. Paul had spoken much of the future kingdom of Christ, and the accusers took hold of this to lay a charge of political delinquency against him. The terms of the accusation, indeed, convey a remarkable intimation of the extent to which Christianity had already become a matter of wide report among the nations, as well as of the vague notions which were entertained of it. "These that have turned the world upside down," cried the mob, "are come hither also; whom Jason has received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying there is another king, one Jesus." But the authorities would not credit or entertain so vague a charge against the respectable and well-known citizens who were brought before them as being implicated in it; and after they had taken security from Jason that there should be no violation of the public peace, and that the parties whose proceedings were questioned should soon leave the city, the complaint was dismissed.

The same evening Paul and Silas departed from the city—much sooner than they wished, or than they thought good for the church they had been enabled to establish. Paul, however, formed the intention of returning as soon as the excitement against him should have subsided (1 Thess. ii. 18).

Paul and Silas proceeded to Berœa, a town about ten miles distant; and here they had the same pleasure of finding Jews open to conviction, and disposed to examine by the Scriptural tests to which they referred the doctrines which they advanced. Some impression was also made upon the Gentiles in this place: but the stay of Paul and Silas was but short, as some Jews from Thessalonica soon arrived at Berœa, and raised such a tumult against them that Paul was constrained to quit the place, accompanied by some of the believers, leaving Silas and Timothy behind him.

From Berœa, which was near the sea, Paul proceeded to Athens—a new and memorable scene for the labours of our great Apostle. Hannah More, who in her very eloquent 'Essay on the Character of St. Paul' has put forth all her strength in describing his proceedings at Athens, here remarks:—"Though the political and military splendour of Athens had declined, and the seat of government, after the conquest of Greece by the Romans, had been transferred to Corinth, yet the sun of her glory was not set. Philosophy and the liberal arts were still carefully cultivated; students in every department, and from every quarter, resorted thither for improvement; and her streets were crowded by senators and rhetoricians, philosophers and statesmen. As Paul visited Athens with views which had instigated no preceding, and would probably be entertained by no succeeding traveller, so his attention in that most interesting city was attracted by objects far different from theirs. He was in all probability qualified to range with a learned eye over the exquisite pieces of art, and to consult and enjoy the curious remains of literature—theatres and temples, and schools of philosophy, sepulchres and cenotaphs, statues of patriots and portraits of heroes—monuments by which the artist insured to himself the immortality he was conferring. Yet one edifice alone arrested the Apostle's notice—an altar of the idolatrous worshippers. One record of antiquity alone invited his critical acumen—the inscription 'TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.'"

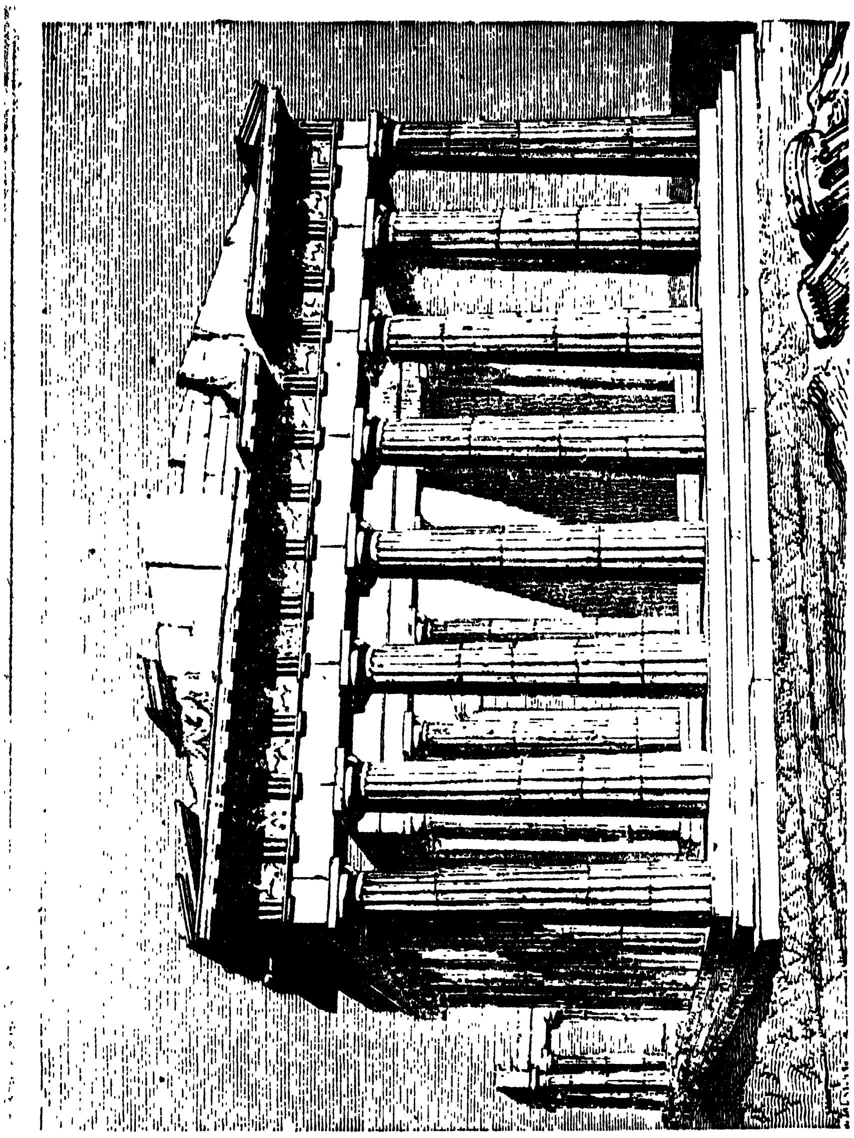
While Paul waited at Athens the arrival of his companions, "his spirit was stirred within him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry;" or rather, "filled with temples, altars, and idols." He could not withhold his testimony to the truth of God against these lying abominations. In the synagogues he debated with the Jews and proselytes, and in the market-places with the people who there congregated. A stranger with a new doctrine soon attracted the attention of the most idle, curious, and critical population in the world; for as the Sacred writer, with characteristic accuracy, remarks, "All the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing." Among the rest the Apostle encountered some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers; and when they heard him speak of *Jesus* and the *Resurrection*, some said "What meaneth this babbler to say?" Others, "He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange demons." The former were probably Epicureans, who denied the possibility of a future life, while they stigmatised the doctrine of the resurrection "the hope of worms;" and the latter Stoics, who regarded Jesus as some new demon or hero whom Paul recommended to their notice.

By them the Apostle was conducted to the Areopagus, or Mars' Hill, which was the place where the Areopagites, the celebrated supreme judges of Athens, were wont to assemble. It was a hill almost in the middle of the city; but nothing now remains from which we can determine the form or construction of the tribunal: the hill is almost entirely a mass of stone, and is not easily accessible, its sides being abrupt and steep. On many accounts this was the most celebrated tribunal in the ancient world. Its decrees were distinguished for justice and correctness; nor was there any court in Greece in which so much confidence was placed. It had cognizance of all kinds of offences against the public weal, and was particularly attentive to blasphemies against the gods, and to the due performance of the sacred mysteries of religion. It does not appear, however, that this tribunal, which usually met by night, was at this time sitting, or that Paul was in any way brought to trial: there were no accusations, no witnesses, none of the forms of judgment. They seem to have resorted thither merely because it was the place where subjects of religion were usually discussed; and because it was a place of concourse for the judges, philosophers, and citizens of Athens. A trial might, however, have been the ultimate result; and this contingency, together with the conflicting opinions and high education of the audience, made the occasion sufficiently solemn and trying, and called for all the fine tact and ability with which the Apostle was so eminently gifted. Nor did they fail him in this great emergency: the consummate address with which Paul acquitted himself on this new and difficult occasion, and the readiness with which his opulent mind found resources equal to the demands upon him, have won the admiration and respect of all ages.

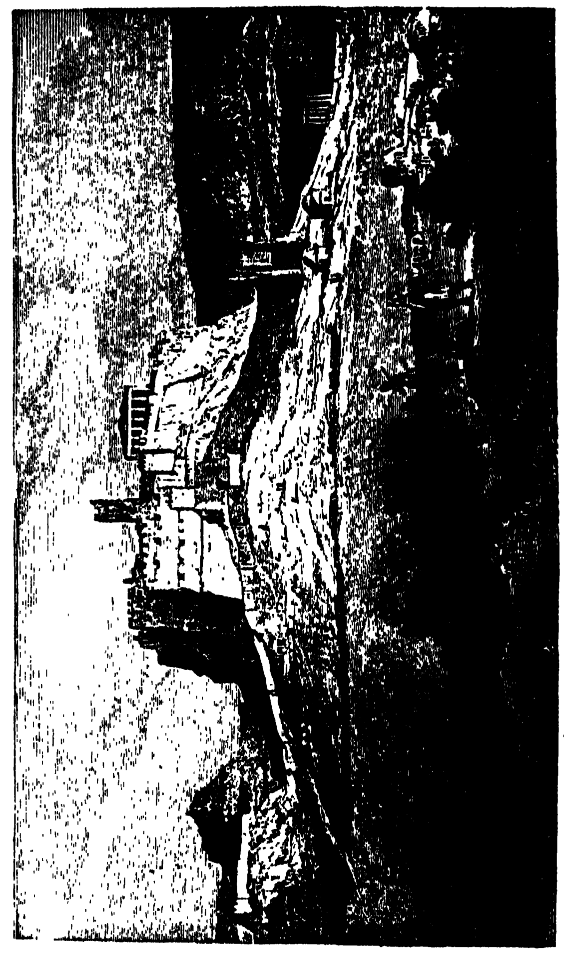
The writer of the 'Essay on the Character of St. Paul' has furnished an eloquent and discriminating account of this discourse, with some portions of which we may indulge the reader:—

"The disposition of this people, their passion for disputation, their characteristic and proverbial love of novelty, had drawn together a vast assembly. Many of the philosophical sects eagerly joined the audience. Curiosity is called by an ancient writer the wantonness of knowledge. These critics came, it is likely, not as inquirers, but as spies. The grave Stoics probably expected to hear some new unbroached doctrine which they might overthrow by argument; the lively Epicureans, some fresh absurdity which would afford a new field for diversion; the citizens, perhaps, crowding and listening, from the mere motive that they might afterwards have to tell the *new thing* they should hear. Paul took advantage of their curiosity. As he habitually opened his discourse with great moderation, we are the less surprised at the measured censure, or rather, the implied civility of his introduction. The ambiguous term (translated) 'superstitious,' which he employed, might be either construed into respect for their spirit of religious inquiry, or into disapprobation of its unreasonable excess; at least he intimated that they were so far from not reverencing the acknowledged gods, that they worshipped one that was UNKNOWN.

"With his usual discriminating mind, he did not reason with these eloquent and learned polytheists 'out of the Scriptures,' of which they were totally ignorant, as he had done at Antioch and Cæsarea before judges who were trained in the knowledge of them; he addressed his present auditors with an eloquent exposition of natural religion, and of the providential government of God, politely illustrating his observations by citing passages from one of their own authors."



1109.—Remains of the Parthenon.
Gweddillion y Parthenon.



1110.—Western Side of the Acropolis.
Ochr Orllewinol Acropolis.



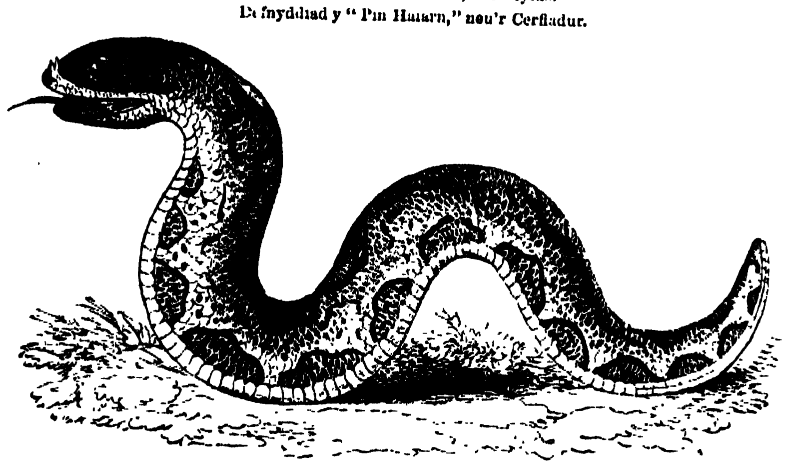
108.—Paul Preaching at Athens.
Paul yn Pregethu yn Athen.



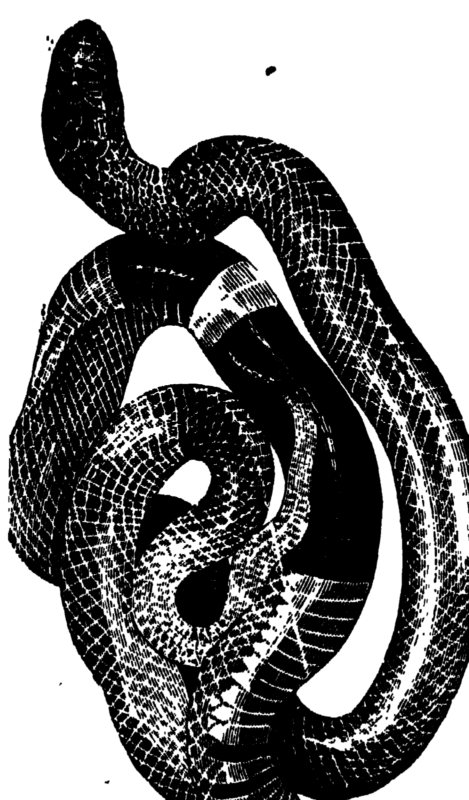
1111.—Use of the "Iron Pen," or Stylus.
Defnyddiad y "Pin Haiarn," neu'r Cerfladur.



1112.—The Inscribed Rocks of Wady Mokatteb.
Creigiau Cerfiedig Wady Mocatteb.



1114.—Viper (El Effah).—Job xx.
Gwiber.



1115.—Asp (Vipere Haje).—Job xx.



1113.—Christian Pilgrims.
Pererinion Cristionogol.

SUNDAY XLV.—JOB.

THE reply of Job brought up Eliphaz, who, with many bitter sarcasms and rebukes, proceeded to expose what he considered the inconclusiveness of the sufferer's reasonings. Job's position, that the happiness or misery of man has no respect to his conduct in life, he censures as subversive of the sentiment of dependence upon God. He then rebukes him, with some hauteur, for pretending to understand the ways of God better than his elders; and concludes with a highly wrought description of the miseries which beset unrighteous men. This speech, which occupies the fifteenth chapter, is well calculated to carry on the design of the poem, by raising the passions of Job, and thus provoking him to proceed to greater lengths in asserting the position he had assumed, as well as to retort the personal aggravations of his friends. He begins—

> "I have heard many such things;
> Miserable comforters are ye all.
> I also could speak as ye do:
> If your soul were in my soul's stead,
> I might string together words against you,
> And shake mine head at you."

But he adds with returning tenderness—

> "But *I* would strengthen you with my mouth,
> And the consolation of my lips should sustain you."

He proceeds with a pathetic description of his misery, and thence argues the inhumanity of his friends in pressing so hardly upon him. Then, after solemnly protesting his innocence, and craving that it may be vindicated before he goes the way whence he shall not return, he concludes with the strongest expressions of grief and utter despair. This occupies the sixteenth and seventeenth chapters.

Then Bildad again takes up the argument, and expresses much resentment for the low estimate which Job had expressed of his friends' eloquent discourses. He reproves him for giving way to despair; but at the same time tells him not to expect that God would in his favour change the laws which regulated the universe. He then describes the miseries which God reserves for the impious, with many touches which show that he intended it to apply to Job, whose sufferings he regards as the measure of his crimes, and of the divine anger. This speech occupies the eighteenth chapter, and Job's reply to this harsh and passionate invective follows in the nineteenth. He again complains of the unkindness of his friends in regarding his sufferings as evidence of his guilt. Once more he implores their compassion for a man afflicted by God without cause. But perceiving that his passionate appeals had no effect, he suddenly turns from them, and expresses an ardent desire that all which he had said in his own defence might be recorded on some lasting monument:—

> "O that my words were now written!
> O that they were inscribed in a register!
> That with an iron pen, and with lead,
> They were engraven upon the rock for ever!"

Let it be observed, that the loss of character involved in the imputations which his friends shower upon him, affects him far more strongly than even his losses and sufferings; and the vindication of his innocence, far more than his restoration to health and prosperity, is what he desires. So now, not satisfied with the tardy vindication involved in his last wish, he, in an outburst of triumphant faith, expresses a conviction that, low and miserable as he now is, he shall yet live to see God appear to vindicate him from their aspersions. He also warns his friends that a time will come when they will be put to shame for their behaviour towards him:—"Know ye that judgment cometh?" This circumstance is introduced with great judgment and effect, to give a cause for, and to create some expectation in the mind of the reader of, the magnificent development which eventually took place, to wind up and silence the controversy.

Far from being mollified by the appeals of Job, or convinced by his protestations of innocence, but rather provoked by his pertinacity, and by the warning with which he concluded, Zophar proceeds to pour forth new examples of the calamities which have been, in all ages, the lot of the wicked, and infers that Job resembled in character those who were like him in condition. (chap. xx.)

Job's desire that his words might be graven on the rock, with an "iron pen," or stylus, suggests some curious matter of inquiry, especially when we become aware of the prevalence of rocks so engraven in the very region which is supposed to have been the scene of the poem. It is not necessary to argue that these inscriptions were so old as the time of Job: but the text shows that the custom which these rocks evince existed in his time. These sculptured rocks are found on the routes which lead from Egypt to the Sinai mountains, although the greatest number of them occur together in the Wady Mokatteb. This is a valley, about seven miles long, stretching out from the Wady Sheikh to the Sinai mountains, the sides of which present for the most part abrupt cliffs twenty or thirty feet high. These cliffs are thickly covered with the inscriptions, which are continued at intervals for the distance of at least five miles. Many attempts have been made to decipher these inscriptions, which are in an alphabetic character not, otherwise than from them, known to palæographists. They were first mentioned by the traveller Cosmas in A.D. 535, and the character was even then unknown. He supposed them the work of the ancient Hebrews; and says that certain Jews who had read them, explained them to him as noting "the journey of such a one, out of such a tribe, in such a year and month;" much in the manner of modern travellers. Further than this the most recent decipherer has yet hardly advanced. When the attention of European scholars was again turned to these inscriptions, almost a century since, by Bishop Clayton, they were still supposed by him and others to have been the work of the Hebrews on their journey to Sinai. More recently they have been regarded as the work of Christian pilgrims on their way from Egypt to Sinai during the fourth century; but the contents of them were unknown in the time of Cosmas, and no tradition seems to have then existed respecting their origin. As to the character itself, Gesenius thought that they belonged to that species of the Phœnician, or rather Syrian, which in the first centuries of the Christian era was extensively employed throughout Syria, and partially in Egypt; having most affinity with the Palmyrene inscriptions. But Professor Beer of Leipzig, who has quite recently deciphered these inscriptions for the first time, regards them as exhibiting the only remains of the language and character once peculiar to the Nabathæans of Arabia Petræa; and supposes that if at any future time stones with the writing of the country should be found among the ruins of Petra, the character would prove to be the same with that of the inscriptions of Sinai. And this had already proved to have been the fact, although he knew it not; for in the then unpublished travels of Irby and Mangles, mention is made of a tomb at Petra with an oblong tablet containing an inscription "in five long lines, and immediately underneath a single figure" on a large scale, probably the date. "The characters were such as none of the party had seen before, excepting Mr. Bankes, who, on comparing them, stated them to be precisely similar to those which he had seen scratched on the rocks in the Wady Mokatteb, and about the foot of Mount Sinai." According to this view, the inscription may not improbably turn out to have been made by the native inhabitants of the mountains. "Still," says Professor Robinson, "it cannot but be regarded as a most singular fact that here, in these lone mountains, an alphabet should be found on the rocks, which is shown by the thousands of inscriptions, to have been once a very current one, but of which perhaps elsewhere not a trace remains."

The *contents* of the inscriptions, so far as Professor Beer has proceeded, consist only of proper names, preceded sometimes by a word signifying "peace," but sometimes "*memoriatus sit*," and a few times "blessed." Before the names the word *bar* or *ben*, "son," sometimes occurs; and they are sometimes followed by one or two words at the end; thus the word "priest" occurs twice as a title. In one or two instances the name is followed by a phrase or sentence which has not yet been deciphered. Among the names, none Jewish or Christian have been found, and the words which are not proper names seem to belong to an Aramean dialect. A language of this kind Professor Beer supposes to have been spoken by the inhabitants of Arabia Petræa, in other words, by the Nabathæans, before the present Arabic language spread itself over those parts; and of that language and writing he regards these as the only monuments now known to exist.

SUNDAY XLV.—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

THIS quotation enabled him, without having recourse to Scripture, to controvert the Epicurean doctrine, that the Deity had no interference with human concerns; showing them, on their own principles, that 'we are the offspring of God,' and that 'in him we live, and move, and have our being;' and it is worth observing that he could select from a poet sentiments which come nearer to the truth than any from a philosopher.

"The orator, rising with his subject, after briefly touching on the long-suffering of God, awfully announced that ignorance would be no longer any plea for idolatry; that if the Divine forbearance had permitted it so long, it was in order to make the wisest not only see but feel the insufficiency of their own wisdom in what related to the great concerns of religion; but He now 'recommended all men, everywhere, to repent.' He concludes by announcing the solemnities of Christ's future judgment and the resurrection from the dead.

"In considering Saint Paul's manner of unfolding to these wits and sages the power and goodness of that Supreme Intelligence who (as the *Unknown God*) was the object of their 'ignorant worship,' we are at once astonished at his intrepidity and his management; intrepidity, in preferring this bold charge against an audience of the most accomplished scholars in the world—in charging ignorance upon Athens! blindness on 'the eye of Greece!'—and management, in so judiciously conducting his oration, that the audience expressed neither impatience nor displeasure till he began to unfold the most obnoxious and unpopular of all doctrines—Jesus raised from the dead."

The great command of language, argument, and temper which Saint Paul manifested, will be better understood, if we consider how utterly repugnant to all his ideas and feelings were the various objects which met his view from the high place in which he stood. Inspired by feelings that were implanted from his youth into the mind of a pious Jew, and glowing with zeal for the honour of God, the apostle must have been really horror-struck at the spectacle of idolatry which met him wherever he turned his eyes. A graphic writer in Mr. Kitto's 'Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature' (art. "*Areopagus*") thus describes the objects which met the view of the Apostle:—"Having come up from the level parts of the city where the markets (there were two, the old and the new) were, he would probably stand with his face towards the north, and would then have immediately behind him the long walls which ran down to the sea, affording protection against a foreign enemy. Near the sea, on one side, was the harbour of Peiræus, on the other that designated Phalerum, with their crowded arsenals, their busy workmen, and their gallant ships. Not far off, on the ocean, lay the island of Salamis, ennobled for ever in history as the spot near which Athenian valour chastised Asiatic pride, and achieved the liberty of Greece. The apostle had only to turn towards his right hand to catch a view of a small but celebrated hill rising within the city, near that on which he stood, called Pnyx, where, standing on a block of bare stone, Demosthenes and other distinguished orators had addressed the assembled people of Athens, swaying that arrogant and fickle democracy, and thereby making Philip of Macedon tremble, or working good or ill for the entire civilized world. On the left, somewhat beyond the walls, was beheld the Academy, with its groves of plane and olive trees, its retired walks and cooling fountains, its altars to the Muses, its statues of the Graces, its temple of Minerva, and its altars to Prometheus, to Love, and to Hercules, near which Plato had his country-seat, and in the midst of which he had taught, as well as his followers after him. But the most impressive spectacle lay on his right hand, for there, on the small and precipitous hill named the Acropolis, were clustered together monuments of the highest art, and memorials of the national religion, such as no other equal spot of ground has ever borne. The apostle's eye, in turning to the right, would fall on the north-west view of the eminence, which was here (and all around) covered and protected by a wall, parts of which were so ancient as to be of Cyclopean origin. The western side, which alone gave access to what, from its original destination, may be termed the fort, was, during the administration of Pericles, adorned with a splendid flight of steps, and the beautiful Propylæa, with its five entrances and two flanking temples, constructed by Mnesicles, of Pentelican marble, at a cost of two thousand and twelve talents. In the times of the Roman emperors there stood before the Propylæa equestrian statues of Augustus and Agrippa. On the southern wing of the Propylæa was a temple of the Wingless Victory; on the northern, a Pinacotheca, or picture gallery. On the highest part of the platform of the Acropolis, not more than three hundred feet from the entrance buildings first described, stood (and yet stands, though shattered and mutilated) the Parthenon, justly celebrated throughout the world, erected of white Pentelican marble, under the direction of Callicrates, Ictinus, and Carpion, and adorned with the finest sculptures from the hand of Phidias. Northward from the Parthenon was the Erechtheum, a compound building, which contained the temple of Minerva Polias, the proper Erechtheum (called also the Cecropium), and the Pandroseum. This sanctuary contained the holy olive-tree sacred to Minerva, the holy salt-spring, the ancient wooden image of Pallas, &c., and was the scene of the oldest and most venerated ceremonies and recollections of the Athenians. Between the Propylæa and the Erechtheum was placed the colossal bronze statue of Pallas Promachos, the work of Phidias, which towered so high above the other buildings that the plume of her helmet and the point of her spear were visible on the sea between Sunium and Athens. Moreover, the Acropolis itself was occupied by so great a crowd of statues and monuments, that the account, as found in Pausanias, excites the reader's wonder, and makes it difficult to understand how so much could be crowded into a space which extended, from the south-east corner to the south-west, only eleven hundred and fifty feet, while its greatest breadth did not exceed five hundred feet. On the hill where Paul had his station, was, at the eastern end, the temple of the Furies, and other national and commemorative edifices. The court-house of the council, which was also here, was, according to the simplicity of ancient customs, built of clay. There was an altar consecrated by Orestes to Athene Areia. In the same place were seen two silver blocks, on one of which stood the accuser and on the other the accused. Near them stood two altars, erected by Epimenides, one to Insult and the other to Shamelessness."

This description will furnish the reader with a distinct impression of the innumerable symbols and monuments of idolatry which met the apostle's view, and will suggest the grounds on which, even before he stood on Mars' Hill, "his spirit was stirred within him when he saw the city *wholly given to idolatry*."

The very skilful use to which, in his discourse, Paul applied the inscription on the altar may claim a few words of further notice. "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by," he said, "and beheld your devotions, I saw an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD; whom, therefore, ye ignorantly (*i. e.* without knowing) worship, declare I unto you. God that made the world," &c. If the word translated "superstitious," was employed in its good sense, as is now generally believed, we perceive that the apostle, after applauding the strength of the sentiment of religious dependence among the Athenians, cites as an instance of it this altar and its inscription to the unknown God. This inscription certainly, as understood by those who framed it, by no means proved that they had attained to the conception of an unknown god exalted above all other gods; but only that, according to their belief, they had received good or evil from some unknown god. But Paul cites this inscription in order to attach a deeper meaning to it. "I announce to you Him," he said, "whom, without knowing him, ye worship;" and proceeded to impress the idea of one God, whose offspring, by one act of creation, all mankind equally were; and after ably tracing the latent consciousness of this great fact evinced by their own acts, and even by the words of their poets, he came to speak of Jesus and the resurrection. So long as Paul confined himself to the development of the unity of the Theistic conceptions, in contrast with the multiplicity arising from their notions in the deification of the powers of nature, the apostle was heard with attention. It seemed to them as a matter of curious philosophical investigation, proposed by one whom they by this time felt to be no common teacher. But so soon as he began to touch upon the doctrine of the Gospel—calling his proud audience to repentance through Jesus Christ, and declaring his resurrection from the dead as the confirmation and seal of this great mission upon earth, and as a testimonial of a general resurrection to take place hereafter—he was interrupted with ridicule on the part of some of his hearers. Others said, that they would hear him speak of the matter another time—thus courteously intimating to the apostle that they wished him to close his address, or else really intending to hear him again. There were only a few individuals in the assembly who joined themselves to the apostle, listening to his further instructions, and became believers. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagite council, and "a



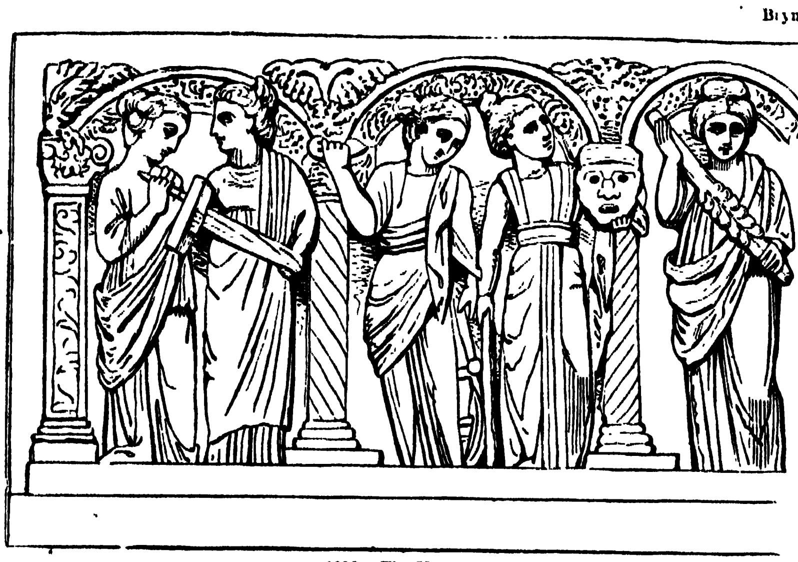
1116.—St. Paul.



1117.—Mars' Hill. The Areopagus, Athens.
Bryn Mars.



1118.—Minerva.



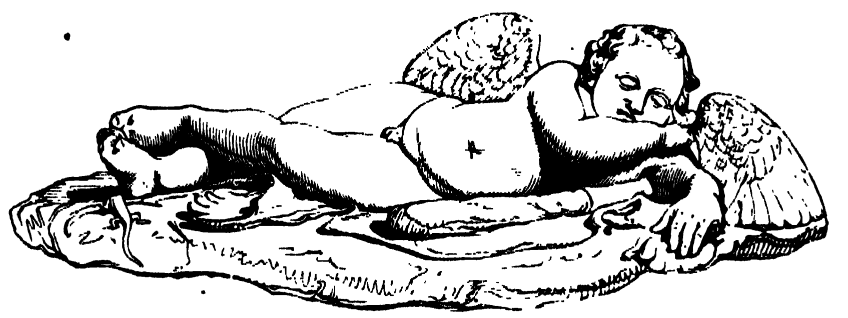
1119.—The Muses.
Yr Awenesau.



1120.—The Muses.
Yr Awenesau.



1121.—Hercules.
Ercwlff.



1122.—Love.
Cariad.



1123.—Hercules.
Ercwlff.



1125.—Sculptures from the Parthenon.
Cerfiadau o'r Parthenon.



1124.—Demosthenes.



1126.—Sculptures from the Parthenon.
Cerfiadau o'r Parthenon.



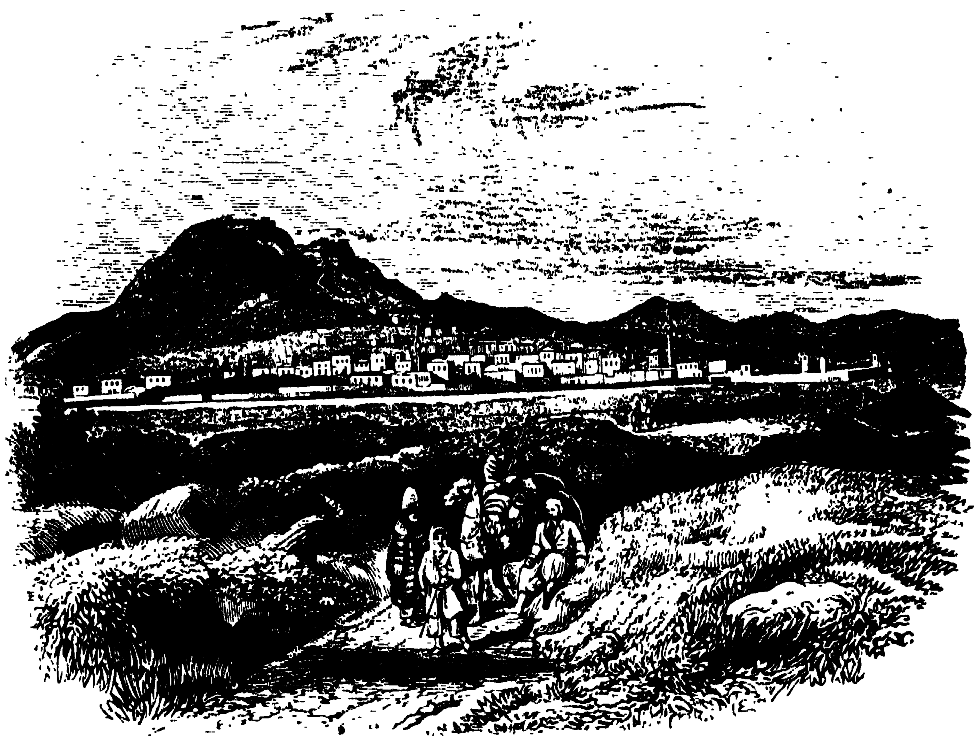
1127.—Sculptures from the Parthenon.
Cerfiadau o'r Parthenon.



1128.—Sculptures from the Parthenon.
Gweddillion o'r Parthenon.



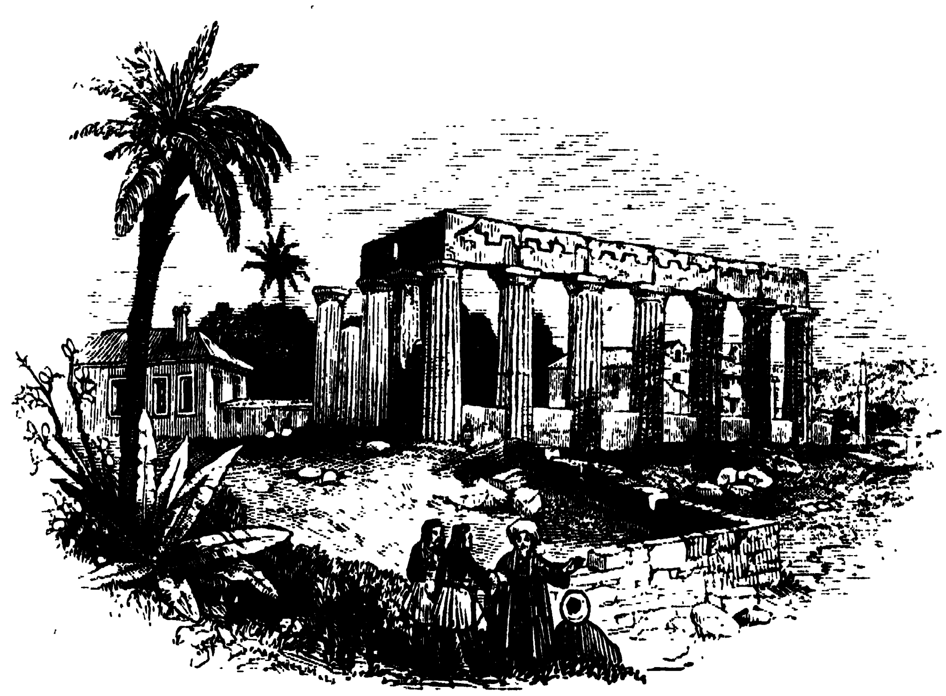
1129.—Jew worshipping with the Head covered.—1 Cor. xi. 4.
Iuddew yn addoli â pheth am ei Ben.



1131.—View of Corinth.
Golygfa ar Corinth.



1130.—Greek worshipping with the Head uncovered.—1 Cor. xi. 5.
Groegiad yn addoli heb beth am ei Ben.



1132.—Temple of Minerva at Corinth.
Teml Minerfah yn Corinth.

woman named Damaris." Of Dionysius nothing more is certainly known than is here stated, although he became the subject of many legends. The only authentic tradition concerning him seems to be, that he was the principal instrument of forming a church at Athens, and became its overseer.

While Paul was at Athens, Timothy returned from Macedonia, and the anxiety of Paul for the new church at Thessalonica induced him to send his young fellow-labourer thither, that he might contribute to the establishment of their faith, and to their consolation under the sufferings to which they were exposed; for Timothy had communicated to him many distressing accounts of the persecutions which had befallen this church.

Paul then quitted Athens himself, travelling alone. He proceeded to the city of Corinth, the metropolis of the province of Achaia, and the seat of the Roman governor. This city, within a century and a half after its destruction by Julius Cæsar, once more became the centre of intercourse and traffic to the eastern and western parts of the Roman empire, for which it was eminently fitted by its natural advantages, namely, by its situation on the isthmus connecting the Peloponnesus with the main land of Greece; and by the possession of two ports, on the opposite sides of the isthmus, one facing towards the Lesser Asia and the East, and the other towards Italy and the West. Being thus situated, Corinth became an important position for spreading the Gospel through a great part of the Roman empire; and hence Paul chose the city, as he had chosen others similarly situated, to be the place where he made a long sojourn.

At Corinth St. Paul found two opposite mental tendencies strongly opposed to the reception of the doctrine he came to promulgate. The first of these was an inordinate devotedness to speculative inquiries, to the neglect of all matters of practical importance; and the other, the disposition to mingle the sensuous tendency with the religious sentiment. Hence the large measure of attention which the apostle devoted to these matters in the admirable epistles which at a subsequent period he addressed to the Corinthian church. The first he designates by the phrase "seeking after wisdom," and the other by "seeking after a sign." The first of these tendencies was chiefly manifested among the large number of persons in Corinth who made pretensions to mental cultivation. And these were not few; for the new Corinth was distinguished from the more ancient city chiefly by becoming, in addition to its commercial celebrity, a seat of philosophy and literature, so that a tincture of high mental cultivation pervaded the place. The second was more apparent among the numerous Jews who had settled themselves in that great commercial emporium, and who entertained the common material conceptions respecting the Messiah and his kingdom. And, besides, a great obstacle to the doctrine of the Cross was found in the gross corruption of morals which at this period pervaded all the great cities of the Roman empire, and which at Corinth was especially promoted by the worship of Venus Aphrodite, to which a celebrated temple was here erected, and which in some degree consecrated that sensual indulgence, to which the usual incitements of a place of great wealth and traffic were already too numerous.

The efficiency of Paul's ministrations in this important but very difficult station appears to have been much promoted by his meeting there a friend and zealous advocate of the Gospel in the person of Aquila, a Jew of Pontus, at whose house he lodged, and with whom he obtained employment at tent-making for his livelihood. Tent-making was in those times and climates a profitable business, and it seems to have been conducted on a large scale by Aquila. He was lately from Rome, which does not, however, appear to have been his fixed residence; for he is supposed to have taken up his abode at different times, as his business might require, in various large cities, the seats of commerce and luxury, where he found himself equally at home. This is a mode of conducting certain kinds of business still common in the East; and the present is not the only trace of it which we find in the Scriptures. He had, however, been constrained to leave Rome under a decree of the Emperor Claudius, who found in the turbulent disposition of the Jewish residents at Rome, who were mostly freed-men, a reason or a pretence for banishing them from the imperial city.

It is not clear whether Aquila was already a Christian when Paul met with him at Corinth. The circumstance that Paul needed employment in his trade will sufficiently account for their coming together, without this supposition; and there is something pleasing to the mind in contemplating the holy apostle as, during or in the intervals of his honest labour, discoursing to his friendly employer of the great facts and doctrines which filled his soul, and which he was always ready and anxious, "in season and out of season," to impart to others; till at length he was enabled to add Aquila and his excellent wife Priscilla also to the number of those who looked to him as their spiritual father. But whether first converted to Christianity or not through the instrumentality of the apostle, his intercourse with them had doubtless great influence in the formation of their views of Christian truth; and from this time we find Aquila a zealous preacher of the Gospel, in which his frequent journeys and changes of residence gave him no ordinary advantages; and in all his labours he was worthily seconded by his wife Priscilla, so that Paul emphatically designates both of them as his "helpers in Christ Jesus." (Rom. xvi. 3.)

Paul, as usual, commenced his public services at Corinth by preaching on the Sabbath-days in the synagogues: but he was soon driven, by the hostile disposition which the Jews manifested, to direct his labours to the Gentiles, through the medium of the proselytes, to whom a small number of Jews joined themselves. The great cause to which the apostle was devoted soon made such progress at Corinth as must have consoled the apostle greatly for his small success at Athens; and the fact of the contrast thus formed in his mind serves to illustrate many allusions in his Corinthian epistles. From this source we learn that he came to Corinth with a very depressing conviction of the insufficiency of human means—of address, of learning, of eloquence—in procuring acceptance for the Divine word; and that therefore he had determined at Corinth to address himself at once and directly to the main point—salvation through Jesus Christ. The success which attended this course of proceeding very soon excited the ill-will of the Jews, who availed themselves of the arrival of a new proconsul, Annæus Gallio, a brother of Seneca the philosopher, to arraign Paul before his tribunal. The ground of accusation in this case was that divisions among them were promoted by Paul, which they alleged to be contrary to the law, under which they were allowed the free and unmolested enjoyment of their religious privileges. But the mild Gallio was by no means inclined to involve himself in what must have appeared to him the idle internal disputes of the Jews; and instead of listening to them, he caused them to be driven from his tribunal. "If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews," he remarked, "reason would that I should hear you; but if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it, for I will be no judge of such matters." On this declaration from the judgment-seat, the heathen auditors, always glad to be let loose upon the Jews, took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him severely as he was leaving the tribunal. He had probably headed the Jewish party on this occasion; but there is reason to hope that he afterwards became a convert, like Paul himself, to the faith he had once persecuted, and that he eventually joined the apostle in his labours, for his first epistle to this very church begins—"Paul . . . *and Sosthenes our brother*, unto the church of God which is at Corinth."

The frustration of this attempt against the apostle enabled him to pursue his labours for a good while without further molestation in this quarter; so that their influence at length became apparent throughout the whole region of Achaia (1 Thess. i. 8; 2 Cor. i. 1); but it is not certain whether in these more discursive labours he used the instrumentality of his disciples, or occasionally suspended his residence at Corinth by a journey into other parts of the province, and then again returned to the principal scene of his ministry.

At length, after having been joined by Timothy from Thessalonica, Paul resolved, before entering upon new operations, to re-visit his former fields of labour, and also proceed to Jerusalem. His soul was grieved at the differences which appeared to be again arising between the Gentile and Jewish converts, and he hoped to be able to mollify them by his personal influence in the Asiatic churches, as well as by taking measures to remove the only plausible ground of accusation which the Jews and Jewish Christians urged against him, namely, that he was an enemy of their nation and of the religion of their fathers. There was at this time a custom among the Jews, arising apparently out of Nazariteship, under which a person visited with sickness, or subject to any other calamity, vowed, if he were restored, to bring a thank-offering to Jehovah in the temple, to abstain from wine for thirty days, and to shave the head. Paul, on his deliverance from some danger during his residence in or journey from Corinth, resolved publicly to express his grateful acknowledgments in the temple at Jerusalem. The form of his doing this was in itself a matter of indifference, and in the spirit of that Christian wisdom with which he was so eminently endowed, he felt no scruple to become, in respect to form, to the Jews a Jew, as to the Gentiles a Gentile. When he was on the point of sailing with Aquila to Lesser Asia, from Cenchrea, he began the fulfilment of his vow by shaving his head.

SUNDAY XLV.—BIBLE HISTORY.



O when the king heard these great and terrible words from the book of the law, he rent his clothes, and evinced great consternation and fear. From this it is generally supposed that the portion which was first read to Josiah was the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth chapters of Deuteronomy; and these were doubtless well calculated to convince him that the guilt and danger of his people were much greater than he had apprehended, and to draw forth the signs of sorrow and humiliation which he manifested. Being thus led to fear that the sentence of wrath had already gone forth, on account of the notorious disobedience of his predecessors, and the crimes of his own generation, Josiah sent to Huldah, the prophetess, to inquire of the Lord for himself, and for the people, concerning the words of the book that was found. The answer was, that the kingdom and the city were indeed doomed to ruin, but seeing that he had himself manifested sincere dispositions towards God, he should have his reward in being gathered to his fathers before the evil days came. But although the strict terms of this response left Josiah to conclude that the day of mercy for Judah had gone by, he not the less endeavoured to recall the people to a sense of their enormous guilt and wickedness, and to make them engage with piety and sincerity in the worship of God. Accordingly, having assembled the people in the spacious courts of the temple, he caused the law to be there read to them, after which he on his part, and they on theirs, bound themselves in the most solemn manner to serve the Lord only, and to observe the commandments of the book which had been read.

After this the king made another progress through his kingdom, thoroughly to root out every fragment of the accursed thing which had brought so much evil upon the land. The zealous king even extended his pious labours into the land of Israel, at least so far as Bethel, which had been the chief seat of the golden calf idolatry under the kings of Israel. He destroyed the altar and high place of Jeroboam, after first polluting them by burning upon them the bones of men taken out of the adjoining sepulchres. In the course of this proceeding the king observed that one of the sepulchres was distinguished by an inscription, and when informed that it was the tomb of the man of God who had, ages before, foretold the very deed in which he was then engaged, he forbore to disturb the dust which it enclosed.

After this Josiah returned to Jerusalem and prepared to celebrate the Passover, which had again been neglected, but which was on this occasion observed with a degree of solemnity and magnificence even exceeding that exhibited in the celebrated passover of Hezekiah. In describing that Passover, the historian affirms that there had been none like it since the time of Solomon; but in describing Josiah's Passover, he goes much farther, and affirms that there had been none like it since the time of Samuel the prophet.

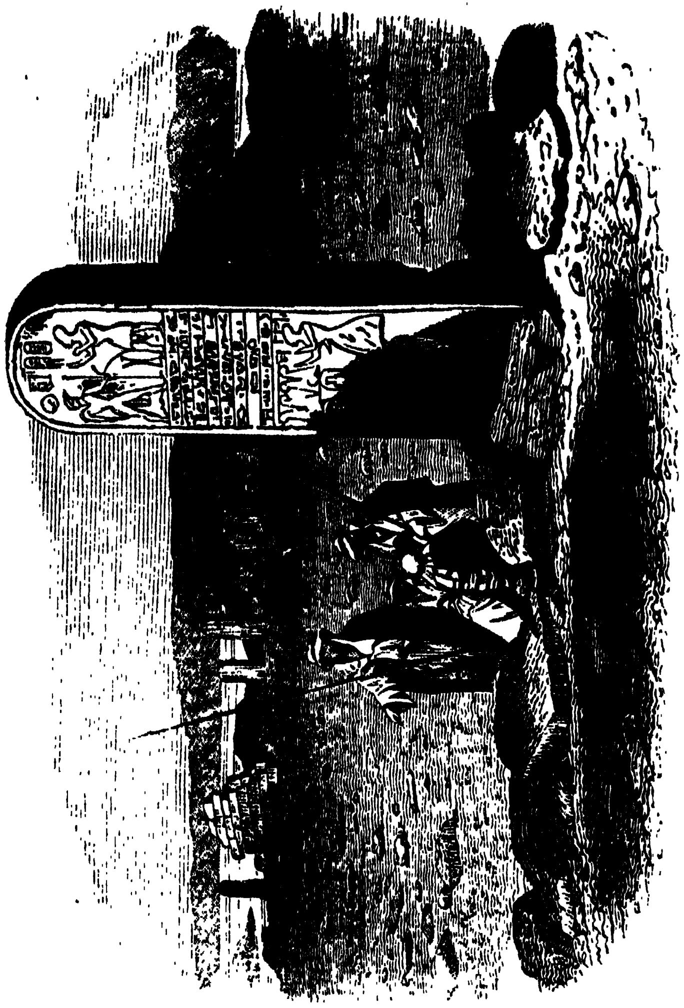
Josiah continued to reign thirteen years after this remarkable solemnity; and during these years he walked steadily in the ways of righteousness and truth. But as for the people, although they were restrained from open idolatry, it appears that, to a large extent, they relapsed secretly to their old abominations, and under a fair outside were ripening inwardly for the dire judgment which hung over their heads.

Meanwhile the Assyrian power was getting weak in the East, and was beginning to give way to the encroachments of the Medes and Chaldeans, by which it was ere long overthrown. The enterprising monarch of Egypt, Pharaoh Necho, desiring to avail himself of this disadvantageous position of his old enemies, assembled a large army, and commenced his march along the coast of Palestine, with the view of securing Carchemish and other strong posts on the Euphrates. The error of preceding kings of Judah had been to rely too much on Egypt, and, in confidence of its support—a confidence scarcely ever justified by the result—to forego all their other obligations. Aware of this error, as well as mindful of his relation to Assyria, and of his obligation to defend the frontier against Egypt, Josiah resolved to oppose the march of Necho through his territories. This zeal in the discharge of what he believed to be his duty to that power of which he was a vassal, cost him his life. The king of Egypt was very reluctant to employ his arms against the king of Judah, but finding that Josiah was resolved to oppose his passage, he gave him battle. The vast host of Egypt, under one of the ablest commanders of the age, soon broke down and dispersed the thin ranks of Judah. Josiah himself fought in disguise, but a commissioned arrow found him out, and inflicted a mortal wound in his neck. His attendants hastened to remove him from the field, and, placing him in another chariot, conveyed him to Jerusalem, where he died. This death, in the heroic and undaunted discharge of what he felt to be his duty, was not unworthy the excellent life which was thus prematurely brought to a close at the early age of thirty-nine years. The prophet Jeremiah, who foresaw but too clearly the evils of the coming time, lamented the death of the last good king in a mournful ode, which has not been preserved. "The singing men and singing women," adds the historian, "speak of Josiah in their lamentations unto this day;" which clearly evinces how long and how tenderly the memory of this excellent king was cherished among the people.

The king of Egypt, intent upon his original design, tarried not to take advantage of the victory he had gained, which amounted to nothing less than the conquest of the kingdom. The people in these difficult circumstances took the very unwise course of raising Jehoahaz, the *second* son of Josiah, to the throne, passing by the natural heir; and, aware of the respect with which the ceremony of anointing was regarded by the Egyptians, they took the unusual course of anointing him king, with the apparent view of making it more difficult for Necho to annul their proceedings. When, however, the Egyptian king returned, about three months after, victorious over the Assyrians, and understood what had taken place, he was highly displeased. The new king was summoned to meet his now sovereign master at Riblah in Syria, where he was deprived of the crown he had too hastily assumed, and the land was condemned to pay in tribute a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. When Necho proceeded homeward, Jehoahaz followed in his train to Jerusalem, and the city of David once more saw its own king enter its walls a captive. On his arrival, Necho bestowed the crown on Eliakim, the eldest son of Josiah, whose name he changed to Jehoiakim, according to a custom frequently observed by lords paramount towards subject princes and slaves. This was a mark of subjection, but does not appear to have been much felt as such by those on whom it was imposed. Then, bearing off the silver and gold which had been levied upon the people, Necho returned to Egypt, taking with him the captive Jehoahaz, who there terminated his short and inglorious career, according to the prophecies of Jeremiah.

Jehoiakim, the vassal of Egypt, was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he sat eleven years upon the throne of Judah. He was little disposed to carry out the designs of his excellent father; but suffered all the goodly order which he had established to be broken up, and neglected to enforce and exemplify the principles by which his conduct had been guided. The people, who had never cordially entered into the late king's reformations, now gladly availed themselves of the licence which the example of the court afforded, and hastened to plunge with new zest into their old abominations. On this the prophet Jeremiah, being divinely commissioned, proceeded to the palace, and in the presence of the king denounced the judgments of God upon him and his, unless by timely repentance he turned the divine wrath aside. From the palace the prophet proceeded to the temple, and called the people to repentance, intimating that their incensed God might yet be pacified if they would but turn from their evil way; and forewarning them that their impenitence would ere long be punished by the overthrow of their great city, and the destruction of their holy place: the priests then present were angered by this last intimation, and they laid their hands upon the prophet and took him before the royal council. But in that council Jeremiah had a warm friend in Ahikam, who pleaded for and even justified him with so much earnestness, that he was dismissed without damage.

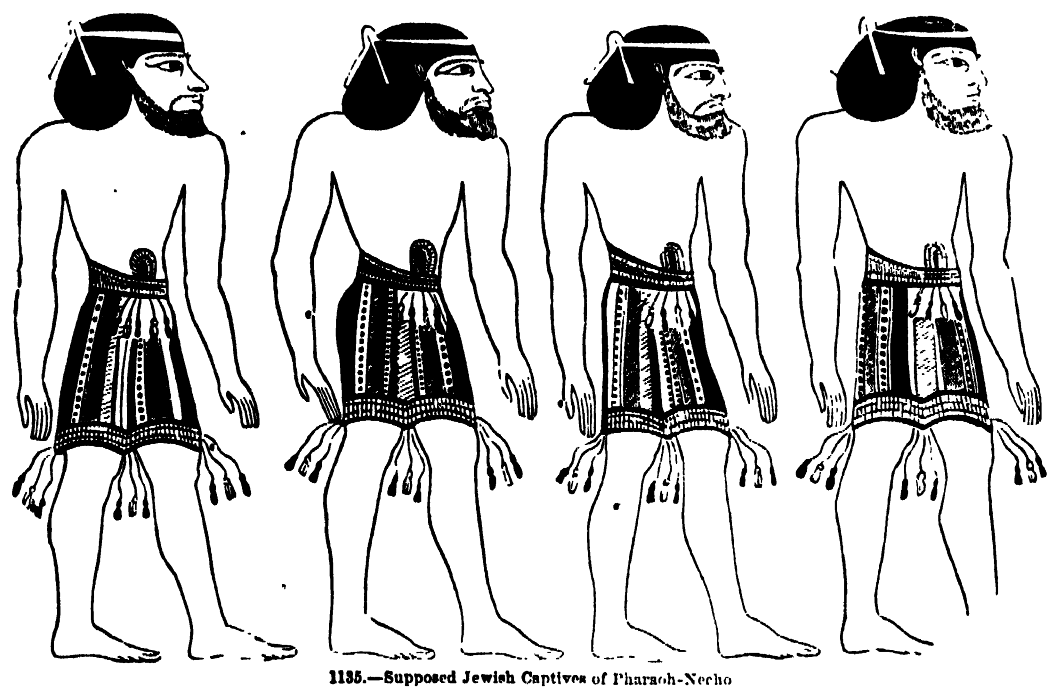
Meanwhile the aspect of affairs began to change in the East. The Medes and Babylonians had gained the upper hand of the Assyrians; and the latter, which took the western division of the empire, had leisure to look beyond the narrow field of their previous operations. The fair portion of that empire west of the Euphrates had either assumed independence or had succumbed to the Egyptians, and this the new power had no inclination to relinquish, and was determined to recover. **Accordingly Nabopolassar, the monarch of Babylon, availed himself of the earliest leisure to send his son Nebuchadnezzar to the west of "the great river." This was at the commencement of the fourth year of Jehoiakim. The Chaldean army, under its valiant and able leader, bore all before it.**



1133.—Egyptian Monuments resembling Modern Tombstones, in the Sinai Regions.
Cofadeiliau Aiphtaidd tebyg i Geryg Beddi Diweddar, yn Ardaloedd Sinai.



1134.—Josiah and the Ambassadors. (Adapted from Girodet.)
Josiah a'r Genhadon. (Wedi ei gyfaddasu o Girodet.)



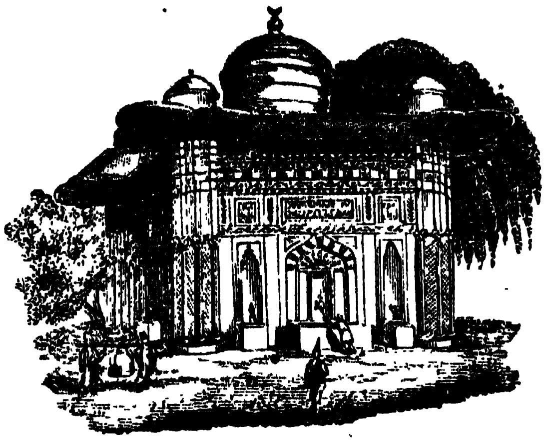
1135.—Supposed Jewish Captives of Pharaoh-Necho
Caethion Iuddewig tybiedig Pharaoh-Necho.



1136.—Besiegers approaching Jerusalem.
Gwarchauwyr yn dynesu at Jerusalem.



1137.—Singing Men. Modern Syrian.
Cerddorion Syriaidd Diweddar.



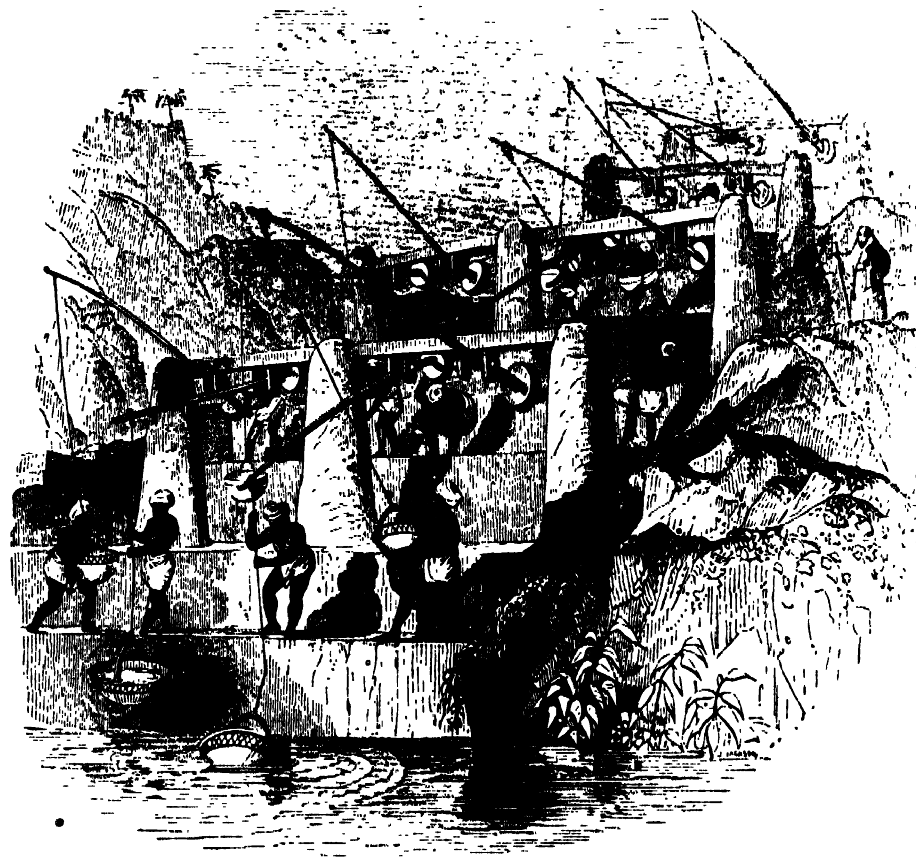
1138.—Fountain.
Ffynnon.



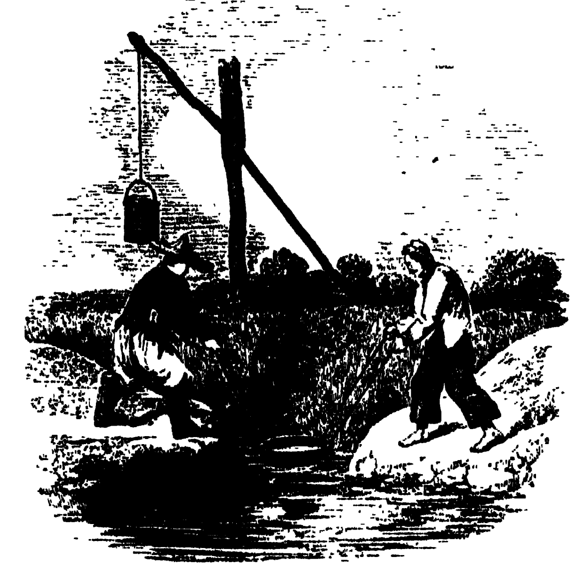
1139.—Caravan at Water.
Taith-fintai wrth Ddwfr.



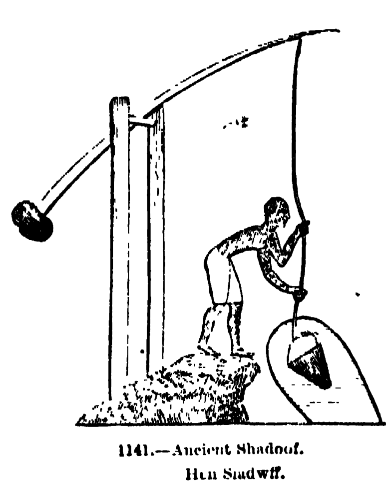
1140.—Irrigation by the Chutweh.
Dyfrhau a'r Cutweh.



1142.—Modern Shadoofs.
Siadwffau Diweddar.



1143.—Chinese Shadoof, &c.
Siadwff Chineaidd.



1141.—Ancient Shadoof.
Hen Siadwff.



1144.—Giving Drink.
Rhoddi Diod.

SUNDAY XLVI.—PROVERBS.

THE Proverbs of Solomon, and the other works ascribed to him, contain not a few of those allusions to water which we expect to find in an Oriental book. Such references in fact pervade the Bible from the beginning to the ending; and rivers of water, wells, and gushing springs supply to the sacred poets and prophets some of their most vivid and happy images. In Proverbs alone we find such as the following :—

" Drink waters out of thine own cistern,
And running waters out of thine own well."
(Prov. v. 15.)

Which is very much elucidated by the fact that even at the present day every respectable house in Jerusalem has a reservoir or cistern sunk in the court-yard, which during the later spring rains is filled up with water, which serves over the long and dry summer, and is then again filled by the early rains of autumn. This is in fact the main dependence of the inhabitants of a region where springs of water are few, and where nearly all the rivers dry up very early in the summer. Therefore a man who has not his own cistern, must depend upon the cisterns of others, and must be constantly asking what is really a great favour from them, and an inconvenience to them; while the supply from this source is in danger of being cut off as soon as the owners of the cistern suspect that their supply is likely to run short, or that the season of drought threatens to be of long duration.

In the next verse we read :—

" Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad,
And rivers of water in the streets."

This is to an Oriental an image of the highest degree of abundance and blessedness. It is however founded on facts. It could indeed not often occur in Palestine that the waste water of a fountain should run in streams through different streets; but it does occur in some places where water is unusually abundant, as in Damascus: and to those who have been inured to the heat, the thirst, and the scarcity of water in Eastern climates, this running of the precious fluid to waste gives an idea of redundant plenty, of luxurious extravagance, and even of sinful waste, which the inhabitants of well-watered regions cannot easily apprehend.

The Proverb—" Stolen waters are sweet " (Prov. ix. 17), although it has passed from the Bible into common use among ourselves, is with us comparatively unmeaning. No one steals water here. The proverb is only felt in its due force in such climates as those in which it originated; where water is often scarce, and, therefore, so valuable as to be an object of care and solicitude to the owners; is often bought at a price we should consider exorbitant; and often stolen by those who will not or cannot buy. Many illustrative passages will occur to those familiar with Scripture. The strifes about wells of water and the watering of flocks (Gen. xxvi. 18—22; Exod. ii. 16—19); the offer of the Israelites to buy (*i. e.* not steal) the water they required in passing through Edom (Num. xx. 19); the doleful complaint of the prophet, " We have drunken our water for money " (Lam. v. 4), and other like passages may be instanced.

" The liberal soul shall be made fat;
And he that watereth others shall be watered."
(Prov. xi. 25.)

The sentiment indicated by this figure is obvious: but the fact on which it is founded cannot be apprehended or felt *strongly* in a moist climate like ours, where real thirst for water is scarcely known. But it follows that where water is scarce and precious, and where also the heat of the climate makes every one need a large quantity of water daily, the liberality of " watering others," that is, of giving water freely to the thirsty, is most strongly felt and gratefully acknowledged. In fact, in the Scriptures, liberality is as frequently instanced by giving water to the thirsty as by giving bread to the hungry. In another place (Prov. xxv. 21), the idea involved in the present verse is dwelt upon very strongly :—" If thine enemy thirst, give him drink ;" and in the New Testament, the Divine king in the grand parable of the final judgment, mentions, to the commendation of the righteous—" I was thirsty and ye gave me drink ;" and the denial of drink to his thirst is noticed in the condemnation of the wicked (Matt. xxv. 35, 42). In another case our Saviour uttered the memorable words: " Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward." (Mark ix. 41.)

" The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water " (Prov. xvii. 14). That is, that although the breach may seem at first unimportant, it is widened by the action of the water, which at length bursts forth in a mighty stream which can be checked no longer, and not only exhausts and wastes the fertilizing waters of kindness and love, but spreads damage and ruin all around.

" The law of the wise is a fountain of life " (Prov. xiii. 14), which is repeated as " the fear of the Lord " in xiv. 27. A fountain of life is a living fountain, that is, a perennial spring, or a spring which sends forth a running stream. In this sense it is contrasted, with an emphasis of praise, to dead or stagnant water, such as that of reservoirs, lakes, ponds, &c.

" Counsel in the heart of a man is like deep water;
But a man of understanding will draw it out."
(Prov. xx. 5.)

This very fine proverb refers to the depth of wells before the water is reached. In Palestine this is often very great. The celebrated well of Jacob, near Shechem, is stated by travellers to be one hundred and five feet deep, with only five feet of water in it—now, at least. It is not improbable that Solomon had this very well in view. The labour of drawing from such a well may possibly have contributed to the first unwillingness of the woman of Samaria to give drink therefrom to the thirsting Saviour—" Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." From such wells water is often drawn by hand in a not too heavy leathern bucket, sometimes by a windlass, but oftener by means of the shadoof, which is the most common and simple of all the machines used in the East for raising water, whether from rivers or from wells. To use the accurate description of Mr. Lane, in his ' Modern Egyptians,' ii. 24, " It consists of two posts or pillars of wood, or of mud and canes or rushes, about five feet in height, and less than three feet apart, with a horizontal piece of wood extending from top to top, to which is suspended a slender lever, formed of a branch of a tree, having at one end a weight, chiefly composed of mud, and at the other, suspended from two long palm-sticks, a vessel in the form of a bowl, made of basket-work, or of a hoop and a piece of woollen stuff or leather; with this vessel the water is thrown up to the height of about eight feet into a trough hollowed out for its reception." That this mode of raising water is very ancient is shown by an example which is represented in the mural paintings of the Egyptians (Fig. 1141). The difference between this and that of which we have quoted the description is, chiefly, that the lever is not *suspended from*, but *balanced upon* the cross-beam. And this more ancient mode is preserved in Syria, and indeed in most other countries where the principle of the balance and lever is applied to the raising of water. This principle is extensively applied to that purpose throughout Asia, was formerly well known in England, and is in use from one end of Russia to the other, where the numerous levers " kicking the beam," and therefore rising high in the air, is a striking characteristic of the villages. In this case, as in China (Fig 1143), the lever is usually balanced upon a stout pole, forked at the upper end; and it of course follows that the stock is higher, and the lever and rope longer in proportion to the depth of the well or stream from which the water is to be taken, or to the height to which it is to be raised. In Syria, where the walls are deep, the stock is high, and the rope long: but in that country (including Palestine) the shadoof is less common than in other parts of Asia; but where it is found, as in the neighbourhood of Jaffa, &c., the lever is balanced, and not suspended. With this simple machine, the chief labour is not to raise the bucket when full, but to overcome the resistance of the lever's loaded end in lowering the bucket when empty. We have ourselves often raised water from Eastern wells by the shadoof, and always found that it required considerable exertion to lower the empty bucket down to the water; but that, when full, the chief care required was to regulate its ascent, so as to prevent it from rising too high and with too much force. When the river is too low or the banks too high for shadoofs on the same level to bring water to the surface of the soil, a series of four or five shadoofs, or sets of shadoofs, is rendered necessary (Fig. 1142). The water is then raised from the river by one set, and discharged into a trench, from which it is taken by another set, and raised to a higher trench, and so on to the top.

SUNDAY XLVI.—BIBLE HISTORY.

ON the defeat of Pharaoh Necho at the Euphrates, the Chaldeans became possessed of the strongholds of that river, and were left without any equal opponent in Syria. After this, while the army was slowly advancing to the south-west, Jeremiah was once more charged to declare the doom which impended over the nation, the desolation of the land, the exile of its people, and the captivity of seventy years. But as all this had no effect upon their obdurated minds, the prophet was directed to take a roll, and write thereon all the prophecies which he had at different times uttered against the city and people. This he did by the hand of one of his disciples, named Baruch, a ready scribe, who wrote them down from his lips. When the roll was finished, the prophet, who was then in prison on account of his former predictions, sent Baruch to read it in the temple, to the people then assembled at the great feast of Expiation; which he was suffered to do without molestation. Soon after this, the Chaldeans appeared before Jerusalem, which held out against them for five weeks, when the holy city was taken, and the king was put in chains to be carried to Babylon. But having humbled himself before the conqueror, who was still desirous to maintain a barrier on the side of Egypt, he was restored to his kingdom, as a tributary prince, and Nebuchadnezzar was content to withdraw with the vessels and other golden spoils of the temple, with which he sent away to Babylon several members of the royal family, and sons of the principal nobles, to aggrandise his triumph, and to serve as hostages for the fidelity of their king. Among these captives were Daniel and his three friends.

Jehoiakim was not at all amended by this calamity and degradation: for his was one of the minds which suffering hardens and not reforms. His obvious policy was to adhere to the solemn vows of allegiance which he had taken to the Chaldeans; and this was the policy which the prophet Jeremiah urged upon him with the utmost earnestness. But the Egyptian party was strong at court, and, yielding to their views, and to the flattering prospect which they drew, the unhappy king had the temerity to renounce his fealty to the king of Babylon, to whose clemency he owed his life and his throne, before the echo of his vows had well passed away. The consciousness of the dangerous position in which he was placed by this act, did not tend to soften his character; his conduct became even more harsh, tyrannical, and oppressive; and the streets of Jerusalem were frequently sprinkled with the blood of innocent and upright men. Among these was the prophet Urijah, whom the king slew with the sword for his declarations of coming evil and punishment. As these things, amid general threatenings of calamity, had no effect upon the king's obdurate spirit, his own *personal* doom was no longer hidden from him. Jeremiah foretold that his death should be such that none should lament, as for other kings, saying—

> "Ah, my brother! nor [*for the queen*], Ah, sister!
> They shall not lament for him, saying,
> Ah, Lord! nor [*for her*], Ah, her glory!
> *With the burial of an ass shall he be buried,*
> *Drawn forth and cast beyond the walls of Jerusalem.*"

The same year, at the fast which had been established on account of the taking of Jerusalem, Jeremiah again sent Baruch with the roll of his prophecies in the temple, where he read them aloud, from the chamber of Gemariah the scribe, to the people assembled in the court below. Being now undistracted by danger at their doors, this reading obtained more attention than the former. Micaiah, the son of Gemariah, who was present, hurried to the palace, and apprised the royal council of the fearful things which Baruch had uttered. On this they sent for him, and caused him to sit down and read the roll at once to them. The contents filled them with alarm, and having been assured by Baruch that he had written it entirely from the dictation of the prophet, they directed him to leave the roll with them, and advised that he and Jeremiah, who had since been released from prison, should for the present keep themselves in concealment—a humane precaution, dictated probably by the recent fate of the prophet Urijah. They then took the roll, and produced it before the king, who was then sitting in his winter chamber, with a brazier of charcoal burning before him. With his permission, the roll was read to him and the assembled nobles of Judah; but no sooner had the king heard a small portion of its contents, than he took it from the hands of the reader, and deliberately cutting it in pieces with his pen-knife, cast it into the fire, where it was consumed, although some of the lords then present implored him to desist from his intention. The exasperated king, whose character is well illustrated by this transaction, then issued orders for the apprehension of Jeremiah and Baruch; but they had taken advantage of the hint given to them, and were nowhere to be found. For this act of their infatuated king, the Jews have even to the present day observed a yearly fast.

When the undaunted prophet understood what had been done, he caused Baruch to write out the same prophecies anew, to which were now added many other words of terrible meaning against the kingdom and its king; while to Jehoiakim himself was addressed the terrible message—

> "Thus saith JEHOVAH:
> Concerning Jehoiakim, king of Judah,—
> He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David;
> And his body shall be cast out,
> In the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost."

The deprivation of sepulchral rights, and of the customary wailings, implied in this and the previous denunciation, involved the highest amount of ignominy and dishonour which the mind of an Oriental could then, or can now, conceive.

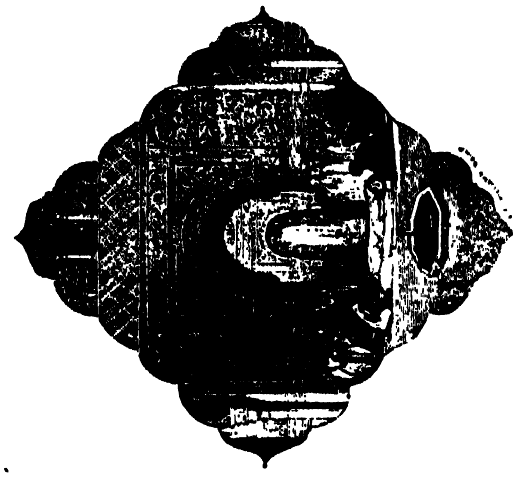
Meanwhile Nebuchadnezzar had been interrupted in his operations for the subjugation of Egypt and Western Asia, by the news of his father's death, on which he crossed the desert with a few attendants and took possession of the throne. When the news of Jehoiakim's revolt reached him, he was still at Babylon; but having no present leisure to chastise him in person, he was content to send orders to his lieutenants, in command west of the Euphrates, to act against him. This brought upon Judah a constant succession of harassing invasions from the neighbouring nations subject to Babylon, in which the Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites in particular manifested the most malignant activity, while the Syrians and Arabs were not behindhand in cruelty and violence. At length the person of Jehoiakim was secured, and he was sent off to Nebuchadnezzar, who had by that time returned to Syria, and was then at Riblah. The monarch at first put him in chains to send him to Babylon; but he altered his mind, and took him back in his train to Jerusalem. There, a degraded captive in the royal city of his fathers, the miserable king died, his end being probably hastened by mortification and grief; and we are bound to conclude that his corpse was refused a place in the sepulchre of the kings, and was treated with all the ignominy which Jeremiah had foretold. (B.C. 599.)

When Nebuchadnezzar thus arrived in person at Jerusalem, he found that the people had already raised Jehoiachin (called also Jeconiah and Coniah), the son of Jehoiakim, to the throne. But this appointment, made without his concurrence, he refused to sanction. Still, however, desirous to keep up the monarchy under its native princes, he bestowed the throne on Mattaniah, a younger son of Josiah, and uncle of Jehoiachin. He changed his name to Zedekiah, and bound him to loyalty by solemn oaths and covenants. The conqueror then departed, having first sent away to Babylon the king Jehoiachin, together with his mother, his wives, his officers, and his nobles, and all "the mighty men of valour," to the number of ten thousand out of Jerusalem only, besides the smiths, the carpenters, and other artificers. These, added to a similar deportation of warriors and artificers which had previously taken place, denuded the country of the flower of its population, and left little more than the crude mass of the people subject to the powerless sceptre of Zedekiah. Among the captives sent to Babylon on this occasion seems to have been Ezekiel, who in his captivity was called to be a prophet, and for many years exercised his ministry by the river Chebar in Babylonia, at the same time that Daniel enjoyed his honours in the imperial court. The Chaldeans also seized the remaining treasures of the palace and the temple, and all the sacred vessels of gold were sent off to grace the idol temple of Babylon.

This severe punishment of the guilty kingdom was calculated to have been a salutary warning to the new king, who besides owed to the conqueror a crown which he would never have possessed in the ordinary course of events. But with amazing infatuation, he soon began to attend to the supporters of the Egyptian policy, who still held their ground as a party in the land; and in proportion as he manifested inclinations towards an Egyptian alliance, which had never produced any good for Israel, he necessarily neglected the obligations under which he had been placed to a power against



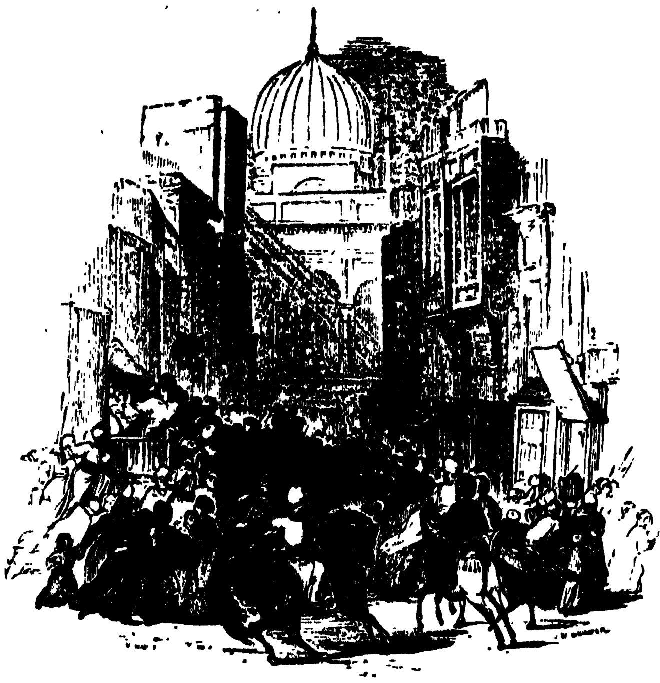
1145.—Mourning Women.
Galar-wragedd.



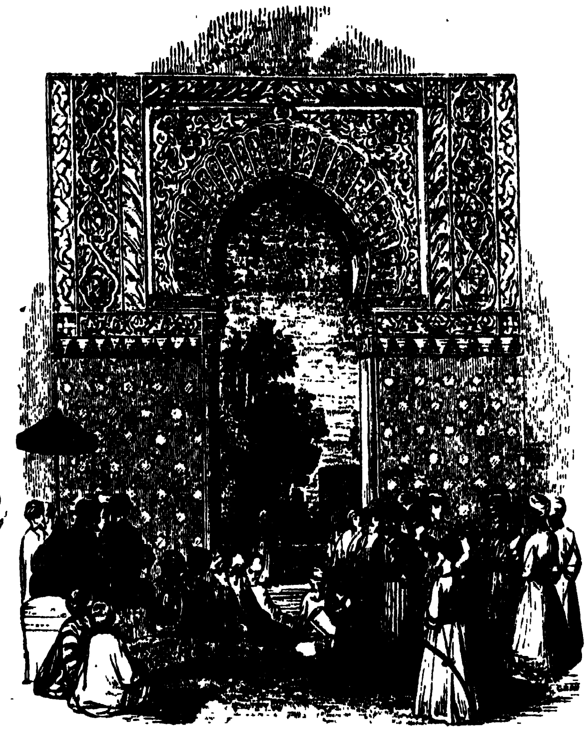
1146.—Mourning over a Corpse.
Galar uwch ben Corph.



1147.—Oriental Funeral and Burial-Ground.
Claddedigaeth a Chladdfa Ddwyreiniol.



1148.—War in the Streets.
Rhyfel yn yr Heolydd.



1149.—Reading before a King.
Darllen ger bron Brenin.



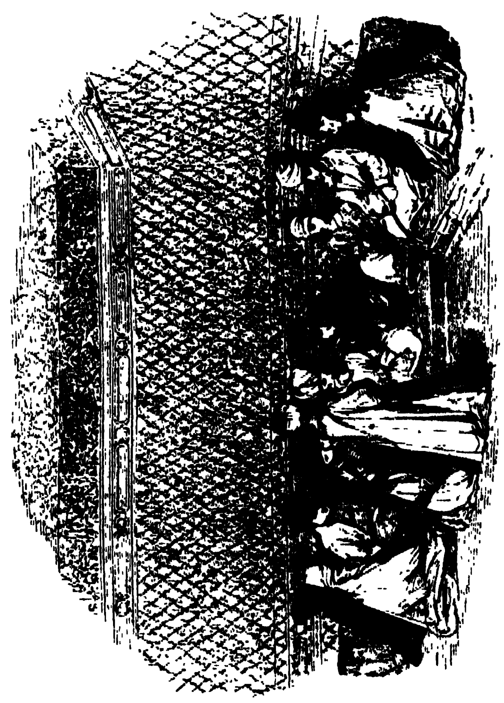
1150.—Brazier.
Crwth Glo.



1151.—Discovery of Flight.
Darganfod Ffoedigaeth.



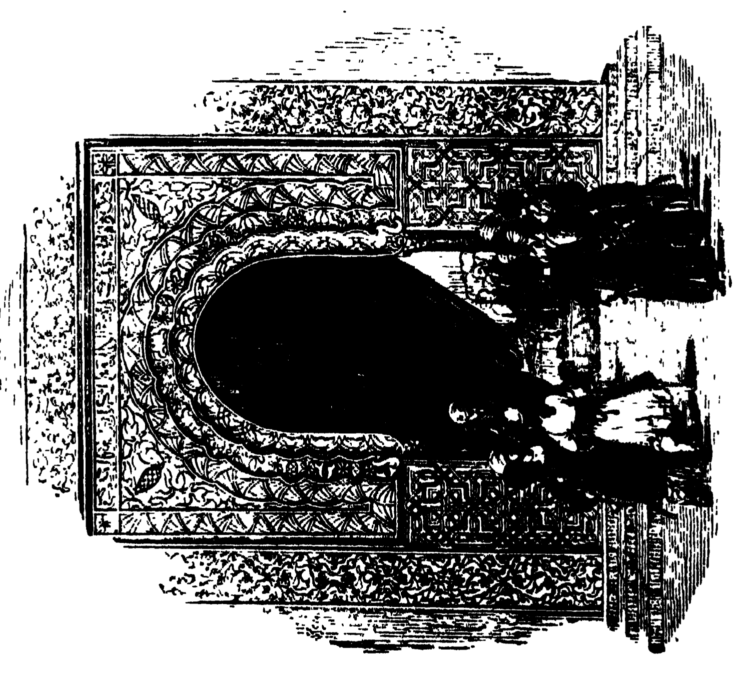
1153.—Fugitive brought back bound.
Ffoadur yn cael ei ddwyn yn ol yn rhwym.



1152.—Counsel.



1154.—Parting of the Way.
Befyll at Groesffordd.



1155.—Conducted to the Presence.

which he was helpless, and independence of which could at the best be only obtained at the expense of dependence upon Egypt. Jeremiah vehemently protested against the errors of this policy, and distinctly foretold the evils which would flow from it: and Ezekiel in his exile poured forth prophecies to the same effect; for it seems that the exiled Hebrews were as sanguine of being restored to liberty as those in Palestine were of recovering their independence.

At length having concluded his alliance with Pharaoh Hophra of Egypt, Zedekiah, in the eighth year of his reign, ventured to cast off his allegiance to the Chaldeans, and by this act drew upon himself that war which ended, as the prophets had foreshown, in the utter ruin of his kingdom. It was not, however, until the next year that Nebuchadnezzar, having assembled a most powerful army, marched against the land of Judah: on his way through Syria he received intelligence that the Ammonites had also revolted, and he then hesitated which country first to invade. Therefore at "the parting of the way," or at the point where the roads divided, a lot was cast with the arrows of divination, by which it was decided that Judah should be first attacked. On, therefore, the Chaldeans marched, clearing the country before them with fire and sword; and at length appeared before the walls of Jerusalem, which they immediately invested. The king, expecting no mercy, and being confident of relief from Egypt, determined to defend the place to the last extremity. The city was very strong, and well supplied with water, so that it might hold out till the defenders were weakened by starvation; knowing this, the siege seems to have been turned by the besiegers into a close blockade, which in the course of time reduced the people to the extremities of famine. In all this time the prophets urged submission, and foretold the consequences of continued obstinacy. Annoyed at the continual remonstrances of Jeremiah, and fearful of their effect upon the people, the king again sent him to prison. Soon after this, the hopes of the besieged were raised to the highest pitch by the actual advance of the Egyptians to their relief; when the Chaldeans deemed it prudent to raise the siege and meet their new enemies half-way. The excitement of that interval may be easily conceived. Hour by hour they watched for the signal fires upon the hills, and for the swift messengers which should announce the advance of the Egyptians over the slaughtered hosts of the common enemy. The banners of the Chaldeans were ere long visible over the tops of the hills, and the mountains round about Jerusalem were covered and the valleys filled with the returning hosts, at whose approach and formidable appearance the Egyptians had retired in alarm to their own country, without striking a single blow for their miserable ally of Judah. Jeremiah, who had been removed to an easier confinement in the court of the prison, again renewed his exhortations to surrender the city to the Chaldeans; but there were not wanting false prophets, who buoyed up the hopes of Zedekiah with assurances that the city would not be taken. So the king still held out, till the miseries of the people became so great that women, naturally tender and pitiful, devoured their own children for food. This could not last: and at length Zedekiah, perceiving that all hope of saving the city was vain, endeavoured with his few remaining troops to escape from the place by a private postern, which the enemy had not secured. But the fugitives were pursued and overtaken in the plains of Jericho, where the royal guards were soon dispersed, and the king and all his children were taken prisoners. The wretched king, together with his family and nobles, were then sent off to Riblah in Syria, where Nebuchadnezzar at that time held his court. Here he was regarded and dealt with as a traitor. His children were slain before his eyes, and it was with ingenious cruelty ordered that this should be his last sight, the horrid image of which should haunt all his remaining days, for immediately after his eyes were put out, and he was sent away in chains to Babylon, where he ended his days in prison.

In the following month Nebuzar-adan, the Chaldean commander in charge of the siege of Jerusalem, took possession of the city, and committed the most dreadful carnage among those who had survived the calamities of the siege. Nebuchadnezzar, enraged at the long and obstinate defence of the place, resolved that it should give no more trouble to himself or his successors. He commanded Nebuzar-adan to raze the city to the ground, without even sparing the temple. Accordingly the general began his operations two days after he had taken possession of the city. After the temple had been stripped of all its treasures and valuables, and after the city had for two days been abandoned to pillage, both the temple and the city were set on fire, and were thus consumed and desolated. The black masses of wall, fortress, and tower, that the fire left standing, were demolished and razed to the very ground, so that of the city of David and the temple of Solomon nothing but a heap of ruins remained. (B.C. 588.)

In memory of this great national calamity two fasts were instituted, which are kept up even to this day: the first, on the seventeenth of the fourth month (answering to our June); and the second, on the ninth of the fifth month (corresponding to July); the first, for the taking of the city; and the other, for the destruction of the temple. That holy fabric was destroyed four hundred and twenty-four years after its foundation by Solomon, and nine hundred and three years from the departure of the Israelites from Egypt.

This miserable end of a city endowed with such eminent privileges as had belonged to Jerusalem, and the ensuing sending into exile of all the people, save only the poor of the land, who were left to till the ground, was lamented in doleful strains by the prophet Jeremiah :—

> "How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people!
> How is she become a widow, that was great among the nations!
> The princess among the provinces—how is she become tributary."

This beautiful personification of the city as a woman sitting in desolate widowhood, is repeated elsewhere in the graphic line,—

> "She, being desolate, sitteth on the ground;"

and it might almost seem to have been present to the minds of the Romans, when, in the medals representing the second destruction of the same city, they represented "the Daughter of Zion" as sitting desolate under a solitary palm-tree.

The prophet proceeds :—

> "She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks:
> Among all her lovers, she hath found none to comfort her;
> All her friends have dealt treacherously, and have become her enemies.
> Judah is gone into captivity. . . . .
> She dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest:
> The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts:
> All her gates are desolate: her priests sigh;
> Her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness."
> (Lament. i. 2—4.)

And then the bitterness of these evils was enhanced by the remembrance of past blessings :—

> "Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction and of her miseries
> All the pleasant things that she had in the days of old."

Jeremiah himself was released from prison when the city was taken by Nebuzar-adan, who was made acquainted with the earnestness with which the prophet had counselled timely submission to the Chaldeans. He offered, in the name of his master, to take him to Babylon and provide for him there; but the prophet chose rather to remain in the land, to which he was the rather induced by his friend Gedaliah being appointed governor of the country and of the miserable remnant left in it. Gedaliah was a good man, of easy temper and unsuspicious character, and not perhaps the better fitted by these qualities for the difficult place he was appointed to fill. He fixed his residence at Mizpeh, and, if left to himself, might perhaps have succeeded in establishing something like order and quiet among the fragments of a nation which had been left in his charge. But, as soon as it became known that the Chaldean forces were withdrawn, many turbulent men who had fled into the neighbouring countries began to return, and they were not well affected towards the government of Gedaliah; some because they deemed his claims inferior to those of others, and some because they hated to see a Jew in the position of a Babylonian governor. Among these returned fugitives was Ishmael, a member of the royal family, who little brooked that even the shadow of a sceptre should be wielded in Judah by one who belonged not to his illustrious house. He organised a conspiracy to take away the governor's life. Gedaliah had a friendly warning of this, but the good man refused to give it any credit; and this generous confidence was rewarded by his being shortly after murdered, with all his attendants and partisans, at Mizpeh, by Ishmael and his associates. They knew very well that the Chaldeans would not fail to avenge this act, and therefore hastened to escape to the land of the Ammonites. In doing this they attempted to carry off with them several of the few remaining persons of consequence, including one of the daughters of the blinded King Zedekiah.

SUNDAY XLVI.—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

PAUL left Aquila and Priscilla at Ephesus, and hastened to Jerusalem, where he visited the church and presented his offering in the temple. He then travelled to Antioch, where he made a considerable stay, and met with Barnabas and other old friends and former associates in the labours and hopes of the Gospel. On quitting Antioch he passed through Phrygia and Galatia, strengthening the churches in those parts in his way to Ephesus, which he had chosen as his next scene of labour, and where he had indeed promised to rejoin Aquila and Priscilla.

The ancient writers, in speaking of Ephesus, were prodigal of epithets describing its glory and excellence. It is mentioned by Strabo as one of the best and most glorious of cities, the great emporium of Asia Minor: while others distinguish it as one of the "eyes" of Asia—Smyrna being the other. But all this glory has long since departed, and long has this great city been venerable only for its ruins. "A few unintelligible heaps of stones," says Arundell, "with some mud cottages untenanted, are all that remain of the great city of the Ephesians.....Even the sea has retired from the scene of desolation, and a pestilential morass, covered with mud and rushes, has succeeded to the waters which brought up the ships laden with merchandise from every country." The most interesting ancient ruin is that of the amphitheatre—the very same, no doubt, which is mentioned in the apostolical record, and which is deemed to have been capable of containing thirty thousand spectators.

Ephesus owed much of its distinction to the famous temple of Artemis (Diana), which was accounted one of the seven wonders of the world, and which drew devotees and pilgrims from all parts to worship at the shrine of the goddess, whom we are not to picture as

"The huntress chaste and fair,"

of classic sculpture and poesy, but, as represented at Ephesus, under the more homely, but certainly not less significant symbol of a woman covered with breasts—an apt emblem of prolific and abundant nature. Ephesus was also eminent as a seat of heathen occult arts, which originally proceeded from the mythic worship of Artemis; and here also the Jewish magic, connecting itself with the heathen, became very prevalent, for the Jews, as Josephus informs us, were very numerous in Ephesus, and enjoyed there the highest class of municipal privileges.

After for three months declaring the Gospel in the synagogues, the apostle was, as usual, constrained by the opposition and deep malignity of the Jews to turn his attention to the Gentiles, by whom his message was more willingly received. He met his hearers daily in a school belonging to one of their number, a rhetorician named Tyrannus. It was perhaps important in a place like Ephesus that the divine authority under which the new doctrine was offered to the people, should be manifested by some striking miracles and "signs." And these were not refused: "God wrought special miracles by the hand of Paul, so that from his body some brought unto the sick handkerchiefs and aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirit went out of them." One remarkable occurrence is forcibly related, as it probably tended more than any other single circumstance to evince the opposition of the Gospel to those juggling arts which held the people in mental bondage. There were at Ephesus a number of Jews who went about pretending that they could expel evil spirits from possessed persons by means of incantations, fumigations, the use of certain herbs, and other arts which they had derived from Solomon; and these people could at times, whether by great dexterity in deceiving the senses, or by availing themselves of certain powers of nature unknown to others, or by the influence of an excited imagination, produce apparently great effects, although none which really promoted the welfare of mankind. When these persons observed the marvellous effects which were produced by Paul in the name of Jesus, they also resolved to use it as a charm for the exorcism of evil spirits. On hearing the words "We adjure thee in the name of JESUS whom Paul preacheth," the demon answered, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?" On which the demoniac, worked into ungovernable rage, flew at them, and with the strong arm of madness "drove them from the house naked and wounded." This circumstance, by showing the real difference between the miracles wrought by the apostle and those to which these Jewish impostors pretended, brought great honour upon the name of Jesus; and many who had before regarded Paul merely as a more skilful magician than themselves, and the name of Jesus as a name which might be employed in their magical arts, could they but use it rightly, were now not only convinced, but alarmed. They repaired to Paul and confessed their former practices, and many of them who had professed "curious arts" brought their magical books—the books explaining and teaching their art, and committed them to the flames. This was no small sacrifice at a time when all books, and especially books of this sort, were so rare and costly; and in this case it is therefore remarked, with peculiar commendation, that the books were worth, or would have sold for, "fifty thousand pieces of silver."

The temple which existed at the time of Paul's visit was the second, the first having been destroyed by fire, kindled by Erostratus to immortalize his name, on the night that Alexander the Great was born. The voluntary offerings of the citizens, and the liberal contributions sent in from all parts, soon supplied the means for its restoration to more than its ancient magnificence. The building was four hundred and twenty-five feet in length, and two hundred and twenty in breadth, supported by one hundred and twenty-seven marble columns sixty feet high, of which thirty-six were curiously sculptured, and the rest polished. These pillars are said to have been the gifts of as many kings! and the bas-reliefs of one of them were wrought by Scopas, one of the most famous of ancient sculptors, and the altar was almost entirely the work of Praxiteles. The first architect, and he who seems to have planned the whole work, was Dinocrates—the same who built Alexandria, and who offered to carve Mount Athos into a statue of Alexander the Great.

Not long after this a violent popular tumult was raised in the city against the apostle, which indirectly furnishes striking evidence of the signal success which attended his labours in this quarter. The devotees who flocked to the temple of Diana were wont to take home with them as relics small models in gold and silver of that far-famed shrine. This branch of manufacture contributed much to the wealth of the city, and formed a most lucrative business to the Ephesian silversmiths. A man named Demetrius, who had a large manufactory of such models, and a great number of workmen, felt that the sale of his wares had been considerably affected by the success of the Gospel, and apprehended that if means were not taken to arrest its progress, the gains of his trade would soon be lost. He assembled his numerous workmen, and easily inflamed their anger against the enemies of their gods, who threatened to deprive Artemis of her honour, and them of their gainful craft. A great tumult was thus easily kindled, and all hastened to the theatre, where they usually assembled, some crying one thing, and some another, without any clear notion why they were thus congregated. The Jews, living precariously in the midst of a heathen population, began to fear that they should be regarded as the authors of this tumult, as the heathen did not distinguish very accurately between Jews and Christians. They, therefore, put forward one Alexander to speak on their behalf; but no sooner did the mob perceive that he was a Jew, than they broke forth into a mighty shout of "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," which they kept up at intervals for the space of two hours. These feelings were, however, confined to the populace; for when Paul himself attempted to enter the place to address the excited crowd, some of the high magistrates who were that year at the head of the religious ceremonies of Lesser Asia, sent to request him not to expose himself to so great a danger. At length the chamberlain of the city succeeded in gaining a hearing, and managed to calm the minds of the people by his representations, and by requiring from them the reason of their assembling, of which most of them were totally ignorant.

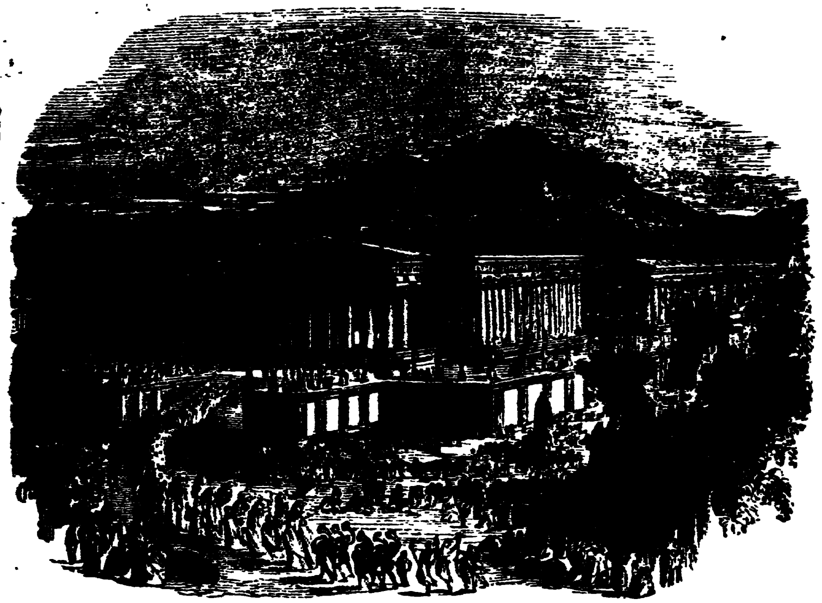
As this transaction took place in the amphitheatre, it might naturally suggest to the apostle images derived from the enforced combats of men with beasts, and with one another, which often there took place. It is thus that we may interpret the allusion which the apostle makes in the Epistle to the Corinthians, which seems to have been written from this place:—"If, after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me" (1 Cor xv. 32). Some, however, hold the expression more literally, and believe that the apostle did actually on this or some other occasion combat with wild beasts in the theatre of Ephesus.



1156.—Ephesus.



1157.—Diana of Ephesus.
Dïana Ephesus.



1158.—Second Temple of Diana at Ephesus.
Ail Deml Dïana yn Ephesus.



1159.—Amphitheatre at Ephesus.
Yr Amphitheatr yn Ephesus.



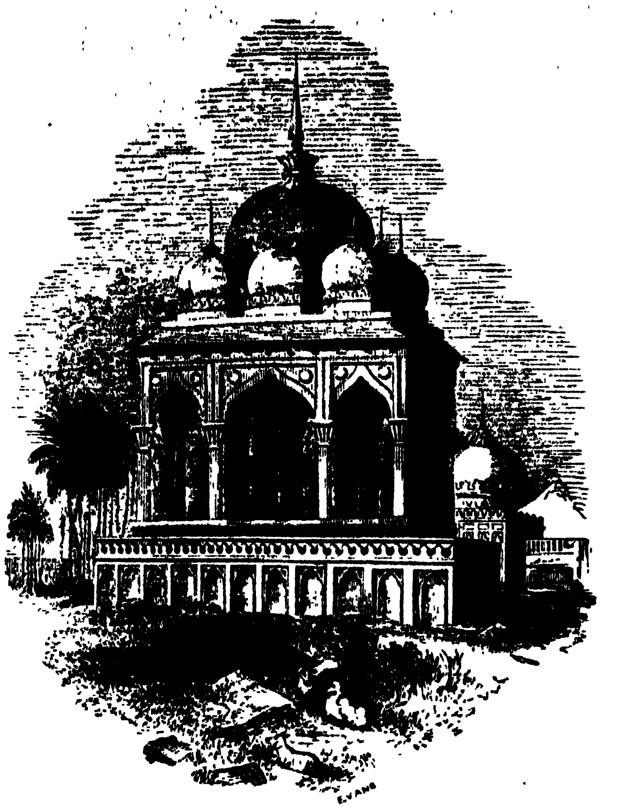
1160.—Gymnasium at Ephesus.



1161.—Gladiatorial Combat.



1162.—Shaving the Head.



1163.—Mausoleum.
Beddadail.



1165.—Mourner at Tomb.
Galarydd mewn Beddrod.



1167.—Funeral.
Claddedigaeth.



1164.—Kubbeh, or Tomb.
Cubbeh, neu Feddrod.



1166.—Tomb
Beddrod.



1168.—Cemetery at Cairo.
Claddfa yn Cairo.

SUNDAY XLVII.—JOB.

IN answer to Zophar, Job endeavours to subvert the position taken by him and the other friends, by adducing instances of impious men who pass their lives in ease and prosperity, enjoy a comfortable old age, and descend with honour to the grave. He anticipates and removes the objections which might be made to this assertion; and then, perceiving by their looks that his friends were not satisfied with his argument, he produces the testimony of travellers, who mention instances of great oppressors who had even escaped in times of general ruin, and had eventually died a peaceful death, had been buried with great pomp, and had been honoured with such splendid monuments that they almost seemed to live and flourish again in their very tombs:—

> "Even this man is borne with honour to his grave,
> Yea, he still survives upon the tomb.
> Sweet to him are the clods of the valley,
> And he draweth all men after him,
> And multitudes without number have gone before him."
> (Job xxi. 32, 33.)

The two last lines are supposed to refer to a funeral procession, the number of persons attending which is, in the East, usually in proportion to the honour in which the deceased has been held. Many illustrations of the sentiment involved in this passage might be adduced. Dr. Good produces the following from the second of the Golden Poems of the Moallakat:—

> "I see no difference between the tomb of the anxious miser grasping over his hoard, and the tomb of the libertine lost in voluptuousness.
> Behold, the tombs of both of them are raised on equal heaps of earth! over which are erected two massy columns of solid marble among the thickening sepulchres."

In reference to the whole passage, this writer remarks that it is "exquisitely beautiful, and may challenge the finest outline of a magnificent sepulchre in Greek or Roman poetry."

The phrase "the clods of the valley shall be sweet unto him" involves a touching allusion to a feeling that the person who is buried may in some degree partake of the prosperous condition of the tomb which contains him. This idea has its foundation in the root-springs of our nature; for who among ourselves is there who, when standing amidst the fresh, green, and sunny, though somewhat shaded, solitude of an old village churchyard, where all voices save those of the rooks are distant, and those not too near—but has associated the idea of perfect peace, of pleasant rest after life's turmoils, with the refuge of such a grave? The craving, however philosophy or even religion may strive to repress it, for a grave like this, for ourselves or for those who are dear to us, involves the feeling of consciousness in the dead, of which the Hebrew poet here makes so happy a use. The same idea seems to have been indulged by the Sultan Amurath the Great, who died in 1450. "Presently upon his death," says Knolles, in his 'History of the Turks,' "Mahomet his sonne, for feare of some innovation to be made at home, raised the siege and returned to Hadrianople: and afterwards with great solemnitie buried his dead body on the west side of the city of Prusa, in the suburbs of the city, where he now lieth, in a chapell without any roof, the grave nothing differing from the manner of the common Turks; which, they say, he commanded to be done in his last will, that the mercie and blessing of God (as he termed it) might come unto him by the shining of the sunne and moone, and by the falling of the raine and the dew of heaven upon his grave."

With the twenty-second chapter begins what is considered a third series of the controversy between Job and his friends.

Eliphaz, unable to refute the last reasonings of Job, founded as they were on undeniable facts, and yet unwilling to abandon his point, proceeds to misrepresent, or at least to give a false colour to his sentiments; which enables him to reiterate the old argument, that Job's wickedness was the cause of his sufferings, and as an encouragement to repentance draws a lively picture of the happiness which might then be in store for him. He says:—

> "Cast to the dust thy gold,
> And the gold of Ophir to the stones of the brook;
> Then shall the Almighty be thy gold,
> Yea, treasures of silver unto thee." (xxii. 24, 25.)

The reply of Job, in the twenty-third chapter, is the effusion of a mind agitated by various and strong emotions, by deep grief, by an earnest desire to justify himself before God, since man would not heed him; by distress at the impotency of this desire; by consolation in the testimony of his own conscience; and by consternation and despair at the thought of the greatness of that power which seemed to be arrayed against him. Having in some degree relieved his mind by this passionate outburst, the afflicted patriarch proceeds in the twenty-fourth chapter to deny the constancy or even frequency of God's judgments upon wicked men, and instances a number of enormous crimes which the Governor of the world had left unpunished, and of which indeed he seemed to take no cognizance, seeing that the criminals continued to flourish in life, and to be fortunate and happy in the time and circumstances of their death. In alluding to the oppressors of the poor and afflicted, the following powerful picture of the miseries of the latter occurs:—

> "Behold, like the wild asses of the desert, they go forth to their work;
> In the morning they go in quest of prey,
> The wilderness supplieth them with food for their children.
> In the fields they reap the harvest
> And gather the vintage of the oppressor;
> They lodge naked, without clothing,
> And without covering from the cold;
> They are drenched with the mountain showers,
> And embrace the rock for want of shelter.
> The fatherless are torn from the breast,
> And the garment of the needy taken for a pledge.
> *They carry the sheaf hungry,*
> They make oil within their walls,
> *And tread the winefat, yet suffer thirst.*
> From the city the dying groan,
> And the wounded cry aloud;
> But God regardeth not their prayer." (xxiv. 5—12.)

This picture needs no explanation or amplification; but the general sentiment, and in particular the two lines printed in Italics, will remind the reader of a passage in Addison's Letter from Italy:—

> "The poor inhabitant beholds in vain
> The reddening orange and the swelling grain;
> Joyless to see the growing oils and wines,
> And in the myrtle's fragrant shade repines;
> Starves, in the midst of Nature's beauty curst,
> And in the loaded vineyard dies for thirst."

Bildad, in the twenty-fifth chapter, does not attempt to gainsay the facts produced by his afflicted friend; but he asserts in a very lofty strain the greatness and supreme perfection of God, and hence infers the irreverence if not impiety of Job in attempting to justify himself. This was very good in itself, but not much to the purpose, as Job sarcastically remarks in commencing his reply, which occupies the six following chapters. He affirms that if the greatness and absolute perfections of the Almighty were in question, he could speak as highly of them as Bildad himself; but he denies that his vindication of his own innocence is incompatible with the most exalted impressions of the Divine wisdom and power.—Chap. xxvi.

Job seems to have expected some reply to this; but perceiving that his friends had given over the contest, not from conviction, but from despair of convincing him of what they believed to be his error, he proceeded with a general reply to all they had advanced, especially to the allegations against himself, and to their erroneous deductions from his complaints and arguments. He alleges that he was far from envying that prosperous condition which he had affirmed to be the general lot of the wicked. He had been goaded into too broad assertions of views of the Divine government opposite to those which his friends advocated; but now he frankly admits that there are occasional examples of Divine vengeance against the wicked, enough to deter from crime, but not enough, as they alleged, to prove that misery was a sign of guilt. After thus qualifying some of the expressions which had fallen from him in the heat of controversy, Job proceeds in the twenty-eighth chapter to deplore that man, with all his power and knowledge, has but little of that true wisdom which might enable him to understand the whole plan of the Divine government, so as to be able to account for its dispensations.

In the three following chapters (xxix., xxx., xxxi.) Job returns to his own case, as a striking illustration of the mysterious ways of Providence, of which he had spoken in the preceding chapter. He draws a truly graphic picture of his former prosperity, and of the respect and honour in which he was held (xxix.), and contrasts it with his present misery and debasement; and lastly, in answer to the insinuations and false charges of his friends, he declares what his conduct really had been in the various relations of life, and once more appeals to the omniscience and justice of God in attestation of his sincerity (xxxi.).

SUNDAY XLVII.—BIBLE HISTORY.

NOW, however, the friend who had warned Gedaliah of Ishmael's designs, got together a number of resolute men and pursued after them; and not only recovered the persons who had been taken away, but dispersed or slew his followers, so that he escaped with only eight men to the Ammonites. Johanan himself, and those who were of sufficient note in the land to be objects of attention to the Chaldeans, then became apprehensive that they should become the victims of the undistinguishing vengeance of the conquerors, and resolved to withdraw into Egypt. This intention was vehemently opposed by Jeremiah, but so far from heeding his remonstrances, they constrained him to go with them.

They had not long taken their departure before Nebuzar-adan arrived in the country with the view of avenging the murder of Gedaliah, and the slaughter of the Chaldean guard which had been left with him. But there were none left to punish, save by sending another party of the inhabitants into captivity beyond the Euphrates; and the country had now become so thin of people, that the Babylonian general found not more than seven hundred and fifty persons whom he deemed it worth his while to send away. Thus signally was the long-foretold depopulation of the land completed; and although nomadic tribes wandered through the country, and the Edomites settled in some of its southern parts, yet the land remained on the whole comparatively uninhabited, and ready for the return of the Hebrews, whose ultimate and not very distant restoration had been as much the subject of prophecy as had been their exile and overthrow.

We have now to follow the captives into their exile beyond "the great river."

The later exiles found themselves not altogether strangers at Babylon, or in the other places to which they were transplanted. Their countrymen of the earlier captivities were settled in various stations and employments, and some of them held posts of trust under the government. By that government they were regarded not as prisoners, but as useful emigrants; and, after a while, they appear to have experienced no other inconveniences than those which naturally flowed from their regrets after their own beautiful land; from their position as strangers in a strange country; from the derision of the natives at the peculiarities of their religion; and, very probably, from a distinctive poll-tax, from which the natives were exempt. This much may be gathered from dispersed intimations: but the principal known facts of the Captivity are connected with the history of Daniel, which has already been given separately in this work. A few other facts, which are not there inserted, may here be introduced.

When Nebuchadnezzar died, he was succeeded by his son Evil-merodach; who immediately released King Jehoiachin, who had grown old in prison, and gave him the highest place among the discrowned kings who figured in his court and took their meat at his table. But he, who had been thirty-seven years in his prison, survived not long his release, for the text implies that he died before his benefactor, who himself reigned but three years.

It may be well to bear in mind that at the time of the accession of Cyrus, who issued the decree for the restoration of the Jews to their own land, all but a few very old people had been born in the country of their exile, and had grown up, and formed connections, and found sources of profitable employment in it. This being considered, we have the more reason to admire the strength of that religious zeal, and that attachment to the land of their fathers, which led them to brave the horrors of the desert, and the discomforts of a desolated country, rather than to feel surprise that a large proportion deemed it better to remain in the land of their exile.

It had long before the event been announced by the prophets that the period of the exile was to be seventy years, counting from the first captivity under Jehoiachin. When those seventy years had expired, Cyrus the Persian had just succeeded to the throne of the East, on the death of his uncle Darius, as already noticed in the account we have given of Daniel. This monarch was the restorer of Israel, to which work he had been appointed by name many years before he was born. (Isa. xliv. 28; xlv. 1.) At his accession to power in Babylon, Daniel the prophet was still alive, and there is every reason to conclude that this venerable personage was high in the esteem of that illustrious conqueror. The prophet knew well that the time was come for the restoration of the captives to the land of their fathers, and there is every probability that it was through his influence that the decree in favour of the Jews was issued. It is highly probable that those important prophecies which refer to Cyrus were shown to him and explained to him by the prophet. If not, this must have been done by some other Jew; for the decree itself indicates his acquaintance with these prophecies, stating what he could only have known through them. It begins—"Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia: JEHOVAH, the God of heaven, *hath given me* all the kingdoms of the earth, and *he hath charged me* to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah." This as plainly as possible states that he had acted under the injunctions of JEHOVAH, whom he recognises as "the King of Heaven," and by implication the King of Earth, seeing that he had "given him" all the kingdoms of the earth. We scarcely need remind the reader that JEHOVAH was peculiarly the Hebrew name of the Most High, and that Cyrus here employs it seems to place beyond dispute the explanation now given.

It must be confessed that the importance of this decree has been somewhat exaggerated. It by no means involved the political emancipation of the Hebrews, or conferred upon them any new or distinguishing privileges. The yoke of civil bondage was still left upon their necks, they were still subjects—not merely tributaries, but subjects—of the Persian empire, and their fair country was but a province of it, to be ruled by Persian governors. They were simply permitted to remove from one part of the empire to another, from the plains to which their conquerors had removed them, to the ancient hills in which their fathers dwelt, with encouragement to re-establish themselves there in the full enjoyment of the worship to which they were known to be strongly attached. In these facts we have another explanation of the circumstance that there were very many Israelites—a great majority—who found in the famous decree no sufficient inducement to abandon the possessions they had acquired in the land of their exile; and it has always been the impression of the Jews themselves that the flower of their nation declined to avail themselves of the benefit extended to them, but chose rather to remain amidst the comforts and ease of Babylon. The noble, the high-descended, the wealthy, are called "the flower" of any nation; and these were the classes who chose to remain in the East: but we cannot well refuse to regard as the real flower of the Hebrew nation the zealous and devoted minority, who sighed for the land of their fathers, and who, in the face of danger and privation, resolved to return to it. Those who were thus disposed were awakened by the decree as by the sound of a trumpet, and hastened from all parts to Babylon, the place of rendezvous.

This first caravan of returning exiles was organized and directed by Zerubbabel, the grandson of King Jehoiachin, and by Jeshua the high-priest. The number of persons which composed it was fifty thousand, including about seven thousand male and female slaves. Before their departure Cyrus restored to them the more valuable of the sacred vessels of gold and silver which had been taken from the temple of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and preserved by his successors, and which were now destined to be again employed in the service of the sanctuary. Zerubbabel was also intrusted with large contributions towards the expenses of the projected temple by those Jews who thought proper to remain in the land of their exile, and who probably hoped in this way to compensate for the deficiency of their personal service in the sacred cause. The beasts of burden in this caravan exceeded eight thousand, and in the book of Ezra the names of those families which returned then, and in the subsequent migration, are very carefully set down, as if to do them honour.

The incidents of the journey are not related. Upon reaching Palestine, the caravan repaired at once to Jerusalem, which they found utterly ruined and desolate. Before separating to seek habitations for themselves, a large sum was raised, by voluntary contributions, for the purpose of rebuilding the temple. The people then employed themselves in securing dwellings and necessaries for their families, which occupied them till the ensuing feast of tabernacles, when they again assembled at Jerusalem, and the customary sacrifices were offered upon an altar set up on the ruins of the temple. After this the people applied themselves with great zeal to the preparations for restoring the sacred edifice. In about a year after the departure from Babylon, the preparations were sufficiently advanced to allow the commencement of the work; and accordingly the foundations of the second temple were laid, with



1169.—Release of Prisoner.
Rhyddhâd Carcharor.



1170.—Persian King and Great Officers.
Brenin Persiaidd a'i Uchel Swyddogion.



1171.—Slaughter of Fugitives.
Lladdfa Ffoaduriaid.



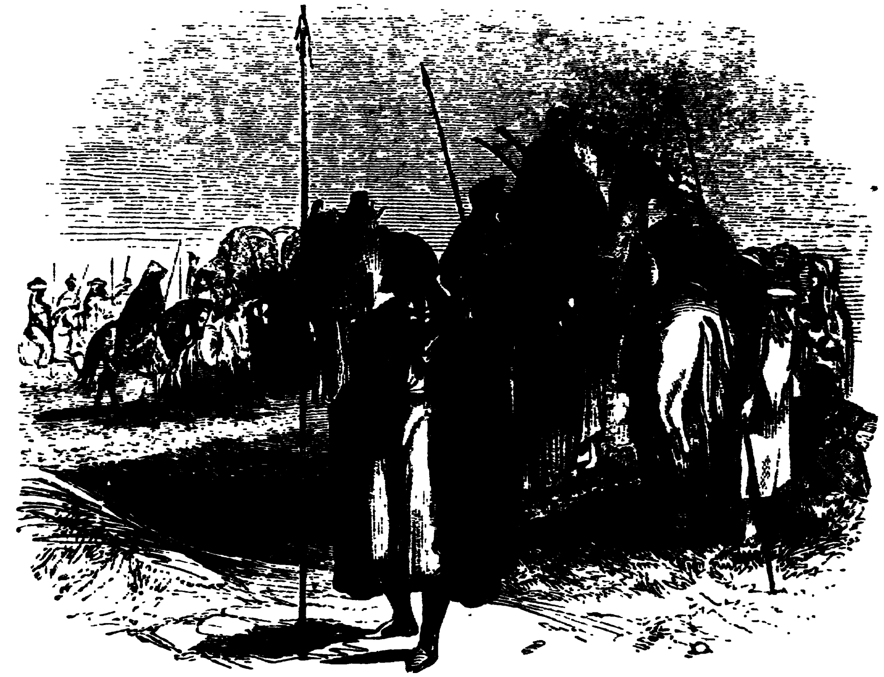
1172.—Desolation.
Tristwch.



1173.—The Decree.
Y Ddeddfwriaeth.



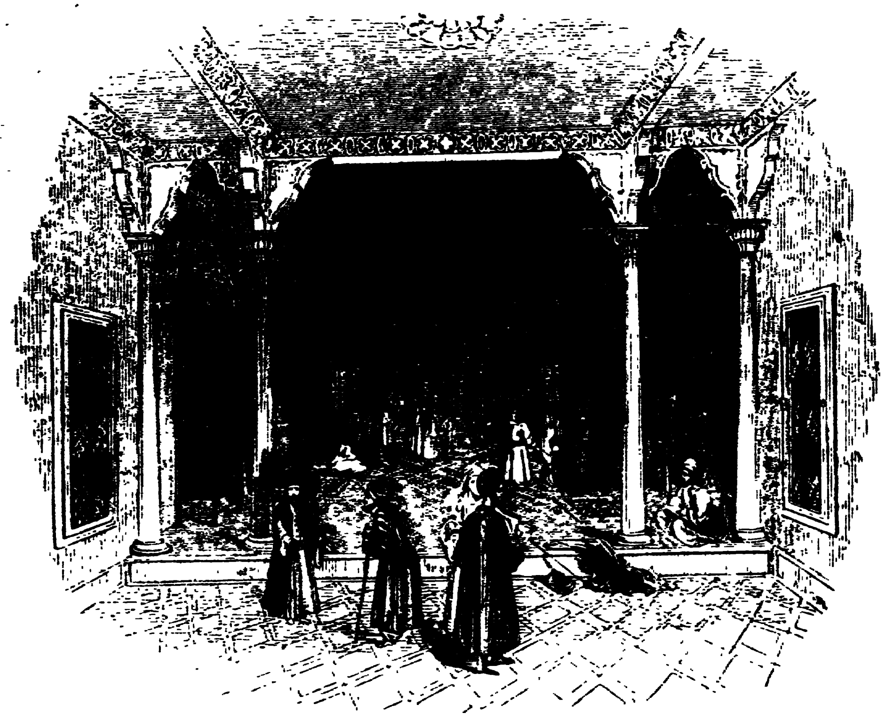
1174.—Desolation.
Tristwch.



1175.—Arab Horde coming to a Halt.
Mintai Arabaidd yn Gwersyllu.



1176.—Book of the Law: Priest and Governor.
Llyfr y Gyfraith: Offeiriad a Llywodraethwr.



1177.—Record Chamber.
Ty y Llyfrau.



1178.—Persian Soldiers.
Milwyr Persiaidd.

great rejoicings and songs of thanksgiving, 535 B.C. These proceedings attracted the attention of the neighbouring people, some of whom had by this time intruded themselves within the former limits of Judea, and who from various influences were disposed to regard the return of the exiles, and their endeavours to restore the ancient things, with great disfavour. The Samaritans, settled in the former kingdom of Israel, were also troublesome. They had by this time so far adopted the Jewish religion and abandoned their idols, that they became anxious to be regarded as natural heirs of the Mosaical covenant, resting probably on their mixed descent from the Israelites with whom their fathers had intermarried. They were most anxious to have their equal claim recognized by the restored Jews, and to that end offered their services, and indeed claimed a right to assist in rebuilding the temple. But their advances were repelled with all the pride of a superior race by the descendants of Abraham; and so resolutely did they oppose themselves to any concession on this point, that the Samaritans at length became highly exasperated, and did their utmost to hinder and obstruct the work they had at first desired to promote. In this respect they were by no means powerless, for their origin appears to have given them considerable influence at the Persian court; and although they could not act openly against the plain decree of Cyrus, an unscrupulous use of their money and influence among the officers of the government enabled them to raise such obstructions that the people were much discouraged, and the work proceeded but languidly, and was at length suspended altogether. This was one great cause of the enmity which ever after subsisted between the Jews and the Samaritans. The suspension of the work commenced in the time of Cyrus, and was continued through the reigns of Cambyses and Smerdis, to the second year of Darius Hystaspis. In this long period the people at length lost all heart for the work, and were disposed to conclude that the set time for it had not yet arrived. They were, however, roused from this lethargy by the exhortations of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, and the work was recommenced with fresh zeal. This recovered activity roused anew the opposition of the Samaritans, whose representations induced Tatnai, the Persian governor of Syria, to write home for instructions, stating that the Jews alleged the authority of a decree of Cyrus for their proceedings; and had informed him—"We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded there many years ago, which a great king of Israel builded and set up." It is touching to hear these poor people speaking in these general terms to a foreigner of the glory of Solomon.

On receiving the despatch of Tatnai, the Persian government caused a search to be made in the record chambers; and in that at Achmetha, or Ecbatana, was found the decree of Cyrus, which contained not only permission to build the temple, but also stated that the expenses were to be defrayed out of the royal treasures This decree was accordingly enforced, and Tatnai was enjoined not only to afford the work all possible encouragement, but was ordered to inflict condign punishment upon any one who ventured to offer any obstructions: "Let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon, and let his house be made a dunghill for this." The temple advanced rapidly to completion under this decree of Darius, and in the twentieth year of the return from captivity it was finished (B.C. 516). In the month Adar of that year the sacred edifice was dedicated to God with great solemnity and magnificence; and in the following month the Passover was celebrated in a regular and solemn manner, for the first time since the restoration of the people to their own land. The ritual service of the temple was then also resumed, and daily celebrated in the same manner as before the captivity; and Jeshua the high-priest encouraged the priests and Levites by his example to attend to the duties of their respective offices.

The position which the restored Jews occupied with reference to the Persian government has already been indicated. Like all the neighbouring nations, they were under tribute to the Persian crown, and subject to its general policy; but they had the free enjoyment of their laws and religion, and the internal government was administered by a governor of their own nation, or by the high-priest when there was no other governor. Judea thus formed a distinct commonwealth with its own peculiar institutions; and, although subject to the Persian king, and responsible in all large matters to him, or to his deputy the governor of Syria, it seems to have enjoyed more security under the Persian monarchy, and a larger measure of practical independence, than so feeble a state could easily have obtained under any other arrangement which the political circumstances of the time allowed.

After the death of Darius Hystaspis, who had reigned thirty-six years over the Persian empire, his son Xerxes succeeded him. This prince was favourably disposed towards the Jews, notwithstanding the attempts made by the Samaritans to prejudice his mind against them. In the third year of this reign the high-priest Jeshua died; and it is supposed that the prince-governor Zerubbabel, and the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, also quitted the world about the same period. Under the discontinuance of the salutary influence which these good men had exercised, the state of affairs among the Jews soon fell into great disorder.

Xerxes was succeeded, in B.C. 464, by his son Artaxerxes Longimanus, whose long reign embraces several circumstances of great interest to the Jewish people. It is true that some writers have chosen to consider that these events belong more properly to the reign of Xerxes himself; but as it would not be in this place suitable to argue the question, we adhere to the interpretation which has always seemed to us the most probable.

Early in this reign the Jews proceeded to rebuild the city on a regular plan, and to surround it with a wall. This last procedure excited the utmost opposition of the Samaritans and other enemies of Israel; who by their representations succeeded in alarming the Persian government lest its dominion in those parts should be endangered by the fortification of a city so strong by nature and so turbulent of old. Hence an order was obtained to prevent the works from proceeding. But ere long the king became better acquainted with the actual position and character of the Hebrew people, as well as with the favourable sentiments of Cyrus and Darius towards them, as manifested in the edicts which those princes had issued in their favour, by which he was also taught to respect the God of the Hebrews, whom his great predecessors had regarded with veneration. All this he manifested in the terms of the commission granted to Ezra, who was authorized, twenty-five years after the death of Jeshua, to proceed to Jerusalem to set in order whatever belonged to the service and worship of Jehovah. This commission decreed that all persons employed about the worship of God should be exempt from paying any of the taxes to the government: and it authorized Ezra, as governor of the Jews west of the Euphrates, to constitute magistrates under him as he might find it necessary, and empowered him to punish offenders according to their crimes. Such of the Jews as thought proper to do so, were invited to return to the land of their fathers with Ezra, and from those who chose to remain behind he was authorised to collect contributions for the service of the temple. To this fund the king himself and his council gave handsome contributions; and the collectors of the royal revenue west of the Euphrates were enjoined to furnish Ezra with whatever he might require, within certain limits, of silver, wheat, wine, oil, and salt, in order that the sacrifices and offerings of the temple should be constantly maintained.

The persons who prepared to accompany Ezra to Jerusalem rendezvoused on the banks of the river Ahava, and their body was found to contain one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four adult males. This number, with the usual proportion of females and children, would give about six thousand souls for the entire party; but it is likely that the women and children were *not* in the usual proportions of settled and domestic life; but that the opportunity was embraced chiefly by young men unburdened with families. This idea is confirmed by the too great readiness which we find among the returned Hebrews to contract marriages with the daughters of their heathen neighbours in Palestine. A party so large, and yet so weak, and known to be in possession of much treasure, would then, and would at this day, be exposed to great danger from the predatory Arab tribes, which, from the date of the earliest historical records to the present day, have infested the desert country between Palestine and Babylonia. Ezra knew this well, and knew that he could easily obtain from the king a sufficient military escort across the desert. But this, for the honour of God, the pious priest was unwilling to do. He had largely explained to the monarch the greatness of the God he served, as well as his power and readiness to preserve all his worshippers from harm; and after this he felt that it behoved him to evince his own confidence in that protection which he had declared to be all-sufficient. Therefore a day was solemnly set apart for fasting and prayer, upon the banks of the Ahava, by which, before they commenced their march, they cast themselves without reserve upon the mercy and care of God during the perilous journey they were about to commence. This confidence in the Divine protection was well rewarded, for after a long journey of four months—which implies long halts upon the way—the new settlers arrived safely at Jerusalem.

Ezra without delay opened his commission to the royal officers in that quarter, and then applied himself with much zeal to the arduous task which had devolved upon him.

SUNDAY XLVII.—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

WE know that it was certainly often the case in later times, in the persecutions of the early Christians, that the raging multitude called for the enemies of the gods to be cast "to the lions" or "to the beasts." The crowd raised by Demetrius might certainly have uttered such cries, but there is no sign that it received any attention from the authorities. It would, however, be hazardous to affirm that Paul did not literally "fight with beasts at Ephesus," as it appears from the apostle's own writings that in the course of his labours he was exposed to many dangers which are not recorded in the Acts of the Apostles.

The probability that this is merely an allusion to the combats of the amphitheatre is, however, much strengthened by the fact that not only are there many such allusions in the epistles of this apostle, but some are found in the very epistle in which this occurs. Thus in 1 Cor. ix. 24—27, there are strong images taken from the games of manly contest—the racing, boxing, and wrestling—for which Corinth itself was famous; as well as allusions to the training which the intended competitors in those games were obliged to undergo, and to the "corruptible crowns" which became the reward of their triumph.

Paul had some time since planned a journey into Greece, for the purpose, among others, of rectifying the irregularities which had grown up in the Corinthian Church, and to re-establish his apostolical authority, which the Judaizing converts had been disposed to impugn. Ample information concerning the points which required his attention is given in his two epistles to the Corinthians, both of which appear to have been written from Ephesus. Finding it needful to delay this journey, the apostle, some time after the first of these epistles had been despatched, sent Timothy to forward the collection which he was making for the church in Jerusalem, and to observe and report on its effect; and after the return of Timothy, the apostle sent another epistle by Titus. It is uncertain whether or not the tumult at Ephesus induced the apostle to set forth upon this journey sooner than he had intended, but it is certain that he departed shortly after on his second journey into Greece. Arriving at Troas, he remained some time there before he embarked, in the hope that Titus would there return to him with an account of affairs at Corinth, and of the effect which his second epistle had produced. But as Titus came not, he departed, with feelings somewhat troubled, to meet him in Macedonia. In the churches which he had formerly established in this region he met with gratifying evidences of their advance in the Christian life and doctrine, which their conflict with the world had only tended to promote. The converts in those parts had suffered much; not, indeed, that any persecution against Christianity had been commenced by the authorities of the state, but because that by withdrawing from the national religion they had excited the enmity of the people among whom they lived, and had besides to contend with the bitter and untiring enmity of the Jews. The extent, and in the same degree the manner, in which the great and influential majority might in such cases oppress and injure, at least in their worldly prospects, those who had turned aside from the common course, may, as Neander remarks, be seen in what the converts in India have had to endure from their heathen relatives and connections, although under a Christian government. But the Macedonian Christians cheerfully endured all things for the cause of the Gospel; and, however much their means of subsistence had been injured, they were ready, even beyond their power, to take an active part in the collection which Paul was then making for the church in Jerusalem, which it was his intention to visit.

In Macedonia Paul met with Titus, and received from him very encouraging accounts of the effects which his last epistle had produced among the Corinthian converts. He spent the rest of the summer and autumn in Macedonia, probably extending his labours into the neighbouring country of Illyria, after which he removed into Achaia, where he spent the winter.

It was the intention of Paul that, after visiting Jerusalem in the ensuing spring, he would change the scene of his labours in the West, and visit for the first time the Roman metropolis. It must therefore have been gratifying to him that during his stay in Achaia he was enabled to form a sort of anticipatory acquaintance with the church in that city. The journey of Phœbe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchrea, to the great city, gave him a suitable opportunity, while at the same time he recommended her to the care and kind offices of the church in Rome. To this we owe the epistle to the Romans.

The number of persons at Rome, manifestly of Gentile origin, who were known to Paul, and to whom he sends his salutations at the end of this epistle, enables us to see that he had in fact a stronger existing connexion with the Christian church at Rome than might at first sight appear. As he could only have known these persons in the places where he had previously laboured, it would appear that many persons resident at Rome, or who had occasion to repair to that great centre of many nations, had been converted by him or his followers, and that they at Rome became the founders and leading men of the church in that city,—formed at first, doubtless, by the reunion in one body of men who had abroad, in different parts, been brought to the knowledge of the Gospel, principally through Paul and his followers, who regarded it as their vocation to preach the Gospel *to the Gentiles.*

After Paul had spent about three months in Achaia, he purposed to close his mission to the East by proceeding to Jerusalem with the collection which had during the past year been making under his direction in Lesser Asia and in Greece. That the sum thus obtained was equal to his expectations appears from the intimation made some time before in the epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xvi. 4), that if the amount were such as he wished, he should himself convey it to Jerusalem. It would be taking too narrow a view of a matter which engaged much of his solicitude, if we limit his intention merely to the relief of the temporal necessities of the church in Jerusalem. His great object and desire was to heal the differences which had unhappily grown up between the Jewish and Gentile Christians; and he justly considered that this magnificent act of liberality on the part of the Gentile churches towards the parent church at Jerusalem, which was entirely composed of converted Jews, would go far to produce a better state of feeling, not only from the act itself, but as a recognition of their unity in Christ, and as a tribute of that love which should exist between all those who are one in Him.

Paul departed from Corinth in the spring of the year, A.D. 58 or 59, about the time of the Jewish Passover, with the intention of being in Jerusalem at the Pentecost. His six companions (Sopater, Aristarchus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus, and Trophimus) went before him to Troas, and there waited for him. He first himself visited Philippi, where he joined Luke, whom he had left there some time before, and whom he now took with him. After five days' voyage the apostle landed at Troas, and remained there seven days. The day before his departure was "the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread;" and, being to quit them on the morrow, perhaps for ever, the earnest apostle was induced to prolong his discourse far into the night. The meeting was held in a large upper chamber, the window of which was open to admit the air; in this window sat a young man named Eutychus, who, being overpowered with sleep, lost his balance and fell backward into the court below, and lay there for dead. Paul immediately hastened down, and cast himself upon the seemingly lifeless body, which he embraced in tenderness and compassion. Whether he had been only stunned by the fall, and the apostle then discovered the signs of life, or that he had been killed outright, and was restored to life under the strong action of the apostle's faith, is a point much doubted, and has never been satisfactorily determined. It is certain, however, that Paul in raising himself from the body said to the alarmed and afflicted congregation, "Trouble not yourselves, for his life is in him." He was then committed to the care of his friends; and the apostle returned to finish his discourse. By the time he had concluded and taken some refreshment before his departure, the morning broke; and Eutychus was then introduced alive and well, to the great comfort of the assembly. Having left Troas with his companions, Paul, pressed for time, did not venture to go to Ephesus, but when at Miletus sent for the elders of the Ephesian church to meet him there.

Paul was by no means ignorant of the great dangers which awaited him at Jerusalem, and he longed to avail himself of this opportunity of pouring out the feelings of his full heart to those who had engaged so large a portion of his solicitude, and of bestowing upon them what might prove his last counsels and his fatherly benedictions. "Behold," he said to them, "I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will befal me there; save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me."



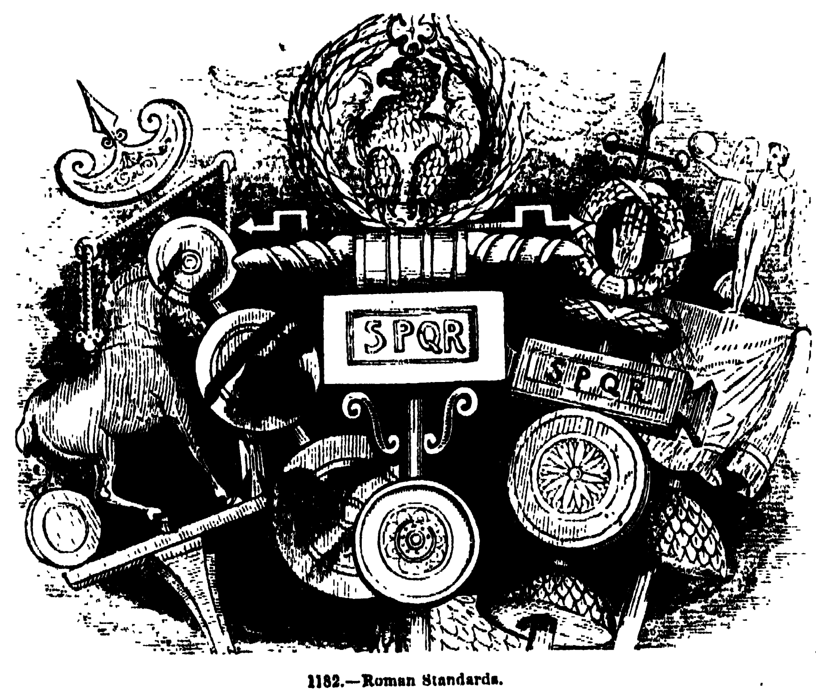
1179.—Combat: Romans and Sarmatians.
Ymladdfa: Rhufeiniaid a Sarmatiaid.



1180.—Crowns of Victors in the Greek Games.
Coronau Buddugwyr y Campau Groegaidd.



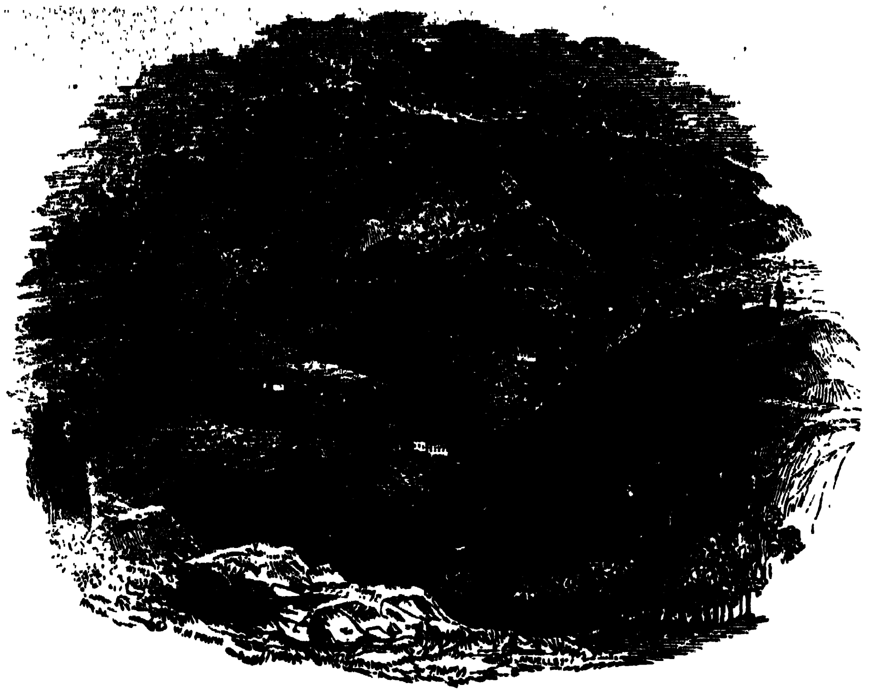
1181.—Olympic Foot-race.
Troed-redegfa Olympaidd.



1182.—Roman Standards.
Llumanau Rhufeinig.



1183.—Forum at Rome.
Dadleufa yn Rhufain.



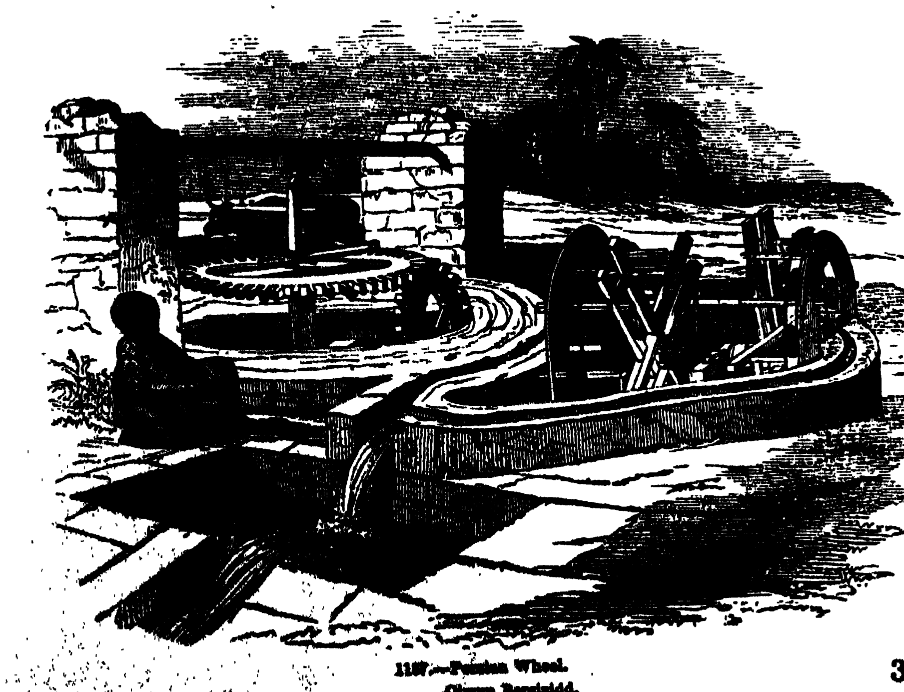
1184.—Terrace Cultivation.
Amaethiad Uchrodfaol.



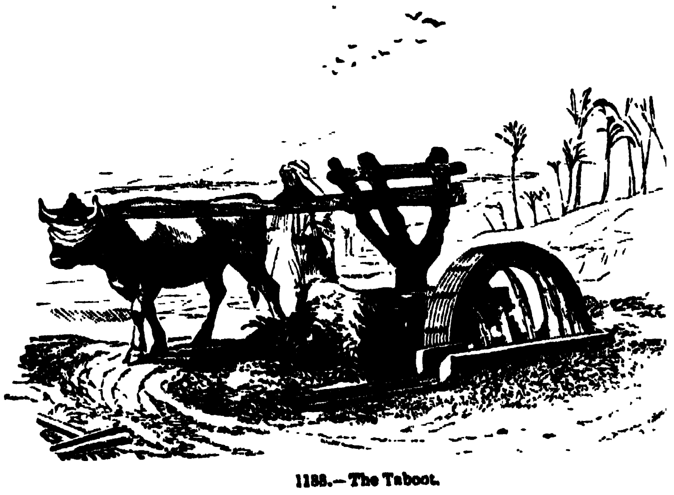
1185.—Raising Water by the Feet.
Cyfodi Dwfr â'r Traed.



1186.—The Mirage.
Y Twyll-ddwfr.



1187.—Persian Wheel.
Olwyn Bersiaidd.



1188.—The Taboot.
Y Tabwt.

SUNDAY XLVIII.—PROVERBS.

THERE is every reason to think that the contrivances for irrigation now used in Western Asia are as old as the art of husbandry itself in the same region, and we are led to suppose that similar contrivances existed among the ancient Hebrews. Under this view the subject assumes a degree of Biblical interest, from the frequent allusions in Scripture to "watered gardens," and to the general importance of irrigation.

We have already described the shadoof, which is so much used for raising water. Another machine much employed for the same purpose is the Sackiyeh, or Persian wheel, represented in Fig. 1187. The name seems to indicate the country of its origin, but it is now largely employed on the banks of all the principal rivers of Western Asia for the purpose of raising water for the irrigation of fields and gardens. It is thus described by Mr. Lane in his 'Modern Egyptians:' —"The sackiyeh mainly consists of a vertical wheel, which raises the water in earthen pots attached to cords, and forms a continuous series; a second vertical wheel, fixed to the same axis, with cogs, and a large horizontal cogged wheel, which, being turned by a pair of cows or bulls, or by a single beast, puts in motion the former wheels and pots. The construction of this machine is of a very rude kind, and its motion produces a disagreeable creaking noise." The example exhibited in our engraving is one of the most perfect of the kind, being that used for the irrigation of the gardens of one of the old Beys on the banks of the canal by which Cairo is traversed. It will be perceived that the revolution of the wheels takes down the string of buckets empty on one side, and brings them up full on the other. It is thus, by the wheel and string of buckets, that water is usually raised from *wells* in Palestine and Syria, although the shadoof is sometimes employed. The Scottish Missionary Deputation observed at the public well outside the village of Khanounes near Gaza, what they call a Persian wheel, at work: it was turned by a camel, and poured a copious supply of water into a trough. What these pious and intelligent travellers say of this well applies to all other public Eastern wells, and illustrates the usages which the Scriptures indicate. "The well is evidently the rendezvous for idlers, gazers, and talkers, and as much a place of public resort as the market. Old and young, cattle and camels were crowded together. The coolness of the spot and the prospect of meeting others no doubt induces many to take their seat by the well-side." This brings to mind the adventures of Eleazer and Jacob at the well of Hasan (Gen. xxiv. 11—29; xxix. 2—13), of Moses at the well of Midian (Exod. ii. 15—20), and even in some degree of that which befel our Lord at Jacob's well (John iv.).

Another mode of drawing water is by the Taboot, which resembles the Persian wheel in some respects, the chief difference being that the pots are not used, but the water is raised up in a large wheel with hollow joints or fellies. This is of course only used where the water has to be raised but a few feet. (Fig. 1188.)

Another and more simple mode of raising water, which the travellers just cited observed in Palestine, gave them much amusement, but which is very familiar to persons of wider travel in the East. At Doulis in Philistia, "while the servants were pitching the tent we wandered through the place, and sitting down by the well observed the women come to draw water. The well is very deep, and the mode of drawing up the water curious. A rope is attached by one end to a large bucket made of skin, and let down over a pulley, while the other end is attached to a bullock, which is driven up and down the slope of the hill; the skin of water is thus hauled up to the top, where a man stands ready to empty it into the trough, from which women receive the water into earthenware jugs. To us this was a novel and amusing sight."

Another very simple mode for the purpose of raising water from rivers, canals, and reservoirs, to irrigate fields and gardens, is that represented in Figs. 1140, 1143, and is in use throughout Asia, from the Mediterranean to the Yellow Sea. The comparison of the two figures, one showing the practice of Syria and Egypt (Fig. 1140), and the other that of China (Fig. 1143), will show the precise identity of the practice, and is one of many instances—of far more than is usually conceived—in which the usages of China coincide with those of Western Asia, and equally illustrate the usages of Scripture. Indeed we have an impression that many Biblical usages which have become extinct in Western Asia, may still be found in China, and might serve to elucidate many passages of Scripture, which for want of a clear apprehension of usages similar to those which they describe, or to which they refer, are to us obscure and difficult. The Jesuits in China seem to have had a perception of this, for in one of their voluminous publications respecting that country there is a curious memoir, giving a mass of most curious and interesting illustrations of the book of Esther from the analogous usages of ancient and modern China.

The mode of irrigation to which we now refer is thus described by Mr. Davis in his excellent book on the Chinese:—"Where the elevation of the bank over which water is to be lifted is trifling, they sometimes adopt the following simple method:—A light water-tight bucket is held suspended on ropes between two men, who by alternately relaxing and tightening the ropes by which they hold it between them, give a certain swinging motion to the bucket, which first fills it with water, and then empties it with a jerk upon the higher level, the elastic spring which is in the bend of the ropes serving to diminish the labour." Grounds intended to be artificially irrigated are usually divided into squares by ridges of earth or furrows, as shown in Fig. 64. The water is conducted from the machine, or from the trough or cistern which is connected therewith, by a narrow gutter, and is admitted into one square after another by the gardener, who is always ready, as occasion requires, to stop or divert the torrent, by turning the earth against it with his foot, and opening at the same time with his mattock a new trench to receive it. This mode of distributing water over land rarely refreshed by rain, is more than once alluded to in the Scriptures; and, indeed, a distinction is founded upon it between Egypt and the land of Canaan:—"The land whither thou goest to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, *and wateredst it with thy foot* as a garden of herbs; but the land whither ye go to possess is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven." Deut. xi. 10, 11. This evidently expresses that the land of Canaan was *naturally* so much better watered by rain than the land of Egypt, that this mode of artificial irrigation would not there, as in Egypt, be required for arable lands, *but only for gardens;* and this distinction exists at the present day. In Palestine artificial irrigation is only used for gardens; for the irrigation of the arable lands the inhabitants trust to the rains of heaven, the moisture afforded by which is sedulously economised and preserved as long as possible in the soil, by the cultivation of the hills in successive terraces, which is the usual mode of culture among the hills of Palestine and Lebanon, for those objects of culture which do not afford their produce till late in the season. Corn does not need this care, as it is harvested before the summer heats have absorbed the moisture of the plains. The above explanation of "watering by the foot" is the only one which can be deduced from any present practice in Egypt. If any other be required, it may be that water was formerly raised by the action of the feet, under some such process as that represented in Fig. 1185.

Having thus been led to give attention to the subject of water, we may add a few words respecting the mirage, or the illusive appearance of water, often witnessed in the dry plains of Egypt and Syria. This phenomenon having been already described in the present work (pp. 468 and 470), we shall only avail ourselves of this opportunity of adding one or two illustrative details. The cut in the preceding page gives a tolerable idea of this appearance as exhibited in the steppes of South America, where it is as often witnessed as in Africa and the East. It is however impossible for such representations to define the limit between the real and the illusive; and a large deficiency is left to be supplied by the imagination. The Scottish Missionary Deputation, when in Egypt, noticed this illusion: "In the distance we observed the well-known phenomenon of the mirage, to which the prophet Isaiah is supposed to allude; 'The parched ground shall become (really) a pool.' Isa. xxxiv. 11. At one time we saw what appeared to be a calm flowing water, reflecting from its unruffled surface the trees growing on its banks, while some object in the background assumed the appearance of a splendid residence amidst a grove of trees. At another time there appeared castles embosomed in a forest of palms, with a lake of clear water stretched between us and them. Generally the mirage may be well known by its continually shifting the view, and by the hazy movement of the atmosphere over the apparent waters."

Another traveller (Lieut. Wellstead) describes the same phenomenon as seen by him in the lowlands of Sinai:—"During the early part of the day we several times beheld the phenomenon of the mirage, or false water of the desert. Its resemblance to a diminutive lake was certainly very striking, since it not only reflected the bushes on its margin, but had something of the ripple of water, and was streaked by those narrow shining particles of light observable on the surface of lakes when viewed from a distance."

SUNDAY XLVIII.—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

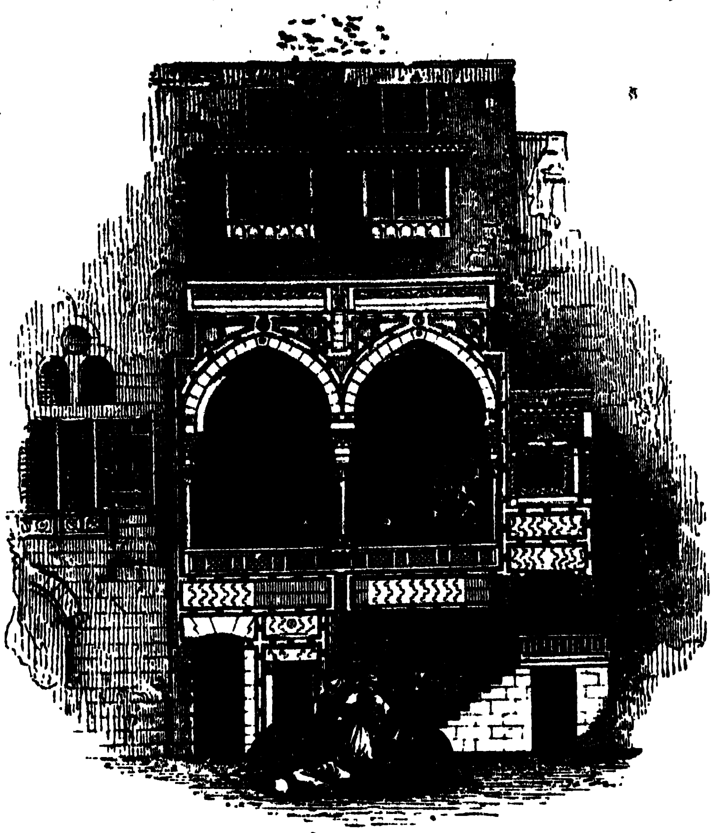
JESUS, and all the blessedness stored with him, then rose to the mind of the apostle, and he added: "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy... And now, behold, I know that ye all among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more." He then, in that strong conviction, called them solemnly to witness that he was "pure from the blood of all men," inasmuch as he had "not shunned to declare unto them the whole counsel of God." He warned them of the dangers arising from false teachers coming among them :—"I know this, that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock;" while even among themselves perverse men would arise, striving to alienate them from the simplicity of the great truths which he had taught. He closed his address by a becoming reference to the example which he had set during his long residence among them :—"Remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one, night and day, with tears...... I have coveted no man's silver or gold, or apparel. Yea, you yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me." Finally, "When he had thus spoken he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell upon Paul's neck and kissed him; sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more." No words can heighten the simple pathos of this scene. Accompanied by these attached friends the apostle forthwith proceeded to the ship, and, bidding them finally farewell, continued his voyage. The ship took a straight course to Coos, a small island of the Greek Archipelago, a short distance from the south-western point of Asia Minor, celebrated for its wine and silk; and the day following arrived at the island of Rhodes, so called from its abundant roses. The principal town, also called Rhodes, was chiefly noted for the brazen colossus which had formerly stood across the mouth of the harbour, and which strode so high that vessels could pass between its legs. This useless thing was one of the seven useless things called "the wonders of the world;" but it had been thrown down by an earthquake long before this time.

From Rhodes the ship proceeded to Batara, which was a maritime city of Lycia in Asia Minor, over against Rhodes. This was the port to which the ship was bound; and here, therefore, the apostle and his party embarked in another ship bound for Phœnicia. They passed Cyprus with its coast on their left hand, and soon arriving in Syria, landed at Tyre, at which still great emporium the ship was to discharge her cargo. We have not before read that the Gospel had been introduced into Tyre; but Paul found there Christian brethren among whom he remained seven days; they were so strongly impressed with the perils which awaited the apostle at Jerusalem, that they urged him to abandon his intention of proceeding thither; but, earnest in the course which his duty seemed to enjoin, the apostle could not be moved from his purpose. Then, says the narrator, who was himself one of the party, "We departed and went away; and they all brought us on our way with wives and children till we were out of the city; and we kneeled down on the shore and prayed." After having taken leave of them the apostle entered another ship, bound for Cæsarea. In those days ships coasted along, and put in at every port; and so Paul's ship put in at Ptolemais or Acre, a place which, although of very ancient date, is but little mentioned in Scripture. It became of great importance after the close of the Old Testament canon, and is often mentioned in the books of the Maccabees and in the pages of Josephus; and there is no city which has figured more in the modern and even very recent history of Palestine. Here also Christian brethren were found, with whom Paul enjoyed one day's happy intercourse, and then proceeded to Cæsarea, a city which had been built by Herod the Great, who by means of a mole had formed there a safe and commodious harbour, which made it a seat of maritime traffic, and the usual point of embarkation and debarkation from and to Palestine. Here also was the seat of the Roman government, and the chief station of the cohorts which held the country in military occupation. Of this most flourishing and celebrated city, built with a magnificence unexampled in Palestine, scarcely a trace now remains, and even the site is forsaken by man, and abandoned to the jackals and other beasts of prey.

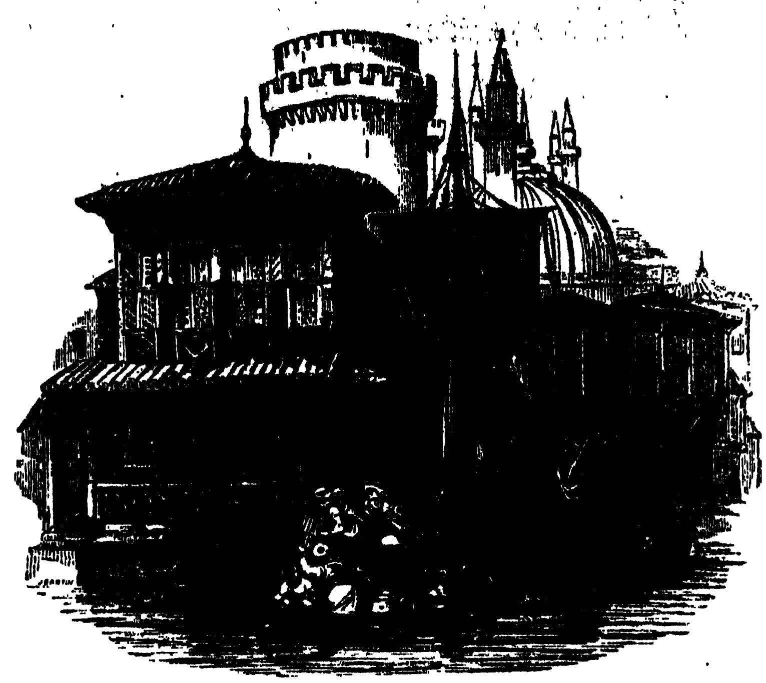
At Cæsarea the apostle was entertained at the house of Philip, one of the seven deacons, where he remained "many days." During his stay, a believer named Agabus—the same who had foretold the dearth which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar—arrived at Cæsarea, and by a significant action premonished Paul of the treatment in store for him at Jerusalem. He loosened Paul's girdle, and bound therewith his own hands and feet, saying "So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. On this Paul's own companions, and all the friends at Cæsarea who heard the prophet's words, implored the apostle to desist from his intention. He was much moved by their earnestness, but made answer,—"What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." When the friends found that he could not be prevailed upon by the prospect of personal danger to change his well-considered purpose, they ceased to importune him, saying, "The will of the Lord be done."

Soon after Paul proceeded to Jerusalem, which was distant but two days' journey from Cæsarea. The day after his arrival he called on James, sometimes called "the Lord's brother," which may, perhaps, mean no more than that he was a cousin or other near relative of Jesus. At the house of James he met the presbyters of the church at Jerusalem, who listened with much interest to the account which he gave of his proceedings and success among the Gentiles. But James called his attention to the fact that a great number of Jews who believed in Jesus as the Messiah, but who were yet zealous and strict observers of the Mosaical law, were prejudiced against him; for those Judaizers, who had everywhere sought to obstruct the ministry of Paul, had, it seems, circulated the report that, not content with insisting on the freedom of the Gentiles from the observance of the Mosaical law, he had required the Jews who lived among them not to observe the law, and not to circumcise their children. As this charge was not true, and as it was important to remove the impression which it had created, Paul readily consented, at the suggestion of James, to give a practical refutation of the charge openly, by taking part in the Jewish worship, in a mode which was highly esteemed among pious Jews. He joined himself to four members of the church who had taken a Nazarite's vow for seven days: he submitted to the restraint which this vow imposed, and intimated to the priests that he would be answerable for the expense of the offerings, which were to be presented on the accomplishment of the purification. But although this measure may have satisfied the minds of all the well-disposed Jewish Christians, the inveterate zealots among the Jews were not thus to be conciliated. On the contrary, they were only the more incensed that the man who, as they said, had everywhere taught the people of God to blaspheme the law and the temple, had ventured to take a part in the Jewish worship. They had seen one of the Gentile Christians, Trophimus, in company with him, and hence the fanatics concluded that he had taken a Gentile with him into the holy place and defiled it. A violent tumult hence arose in the temple; and Paul was only rescued from being torn in pieces by the enraged multitude through the interference of the Roman tribune, who hastened to the spot from the tower or citadel of Antonia, which was close to the temple, and in which the Roman garrison was stationed. But to let the multitude see that there was no intention to rescue a criminal from justice, but only to keep the peace, the apostle was bound with two chains, and led off as a prisoner to the castle. Arriving there, he requested and obtained permission from the tribune to address the excited mob, and therefore, mounting the stairs, he turned round and beckoned with his hand for silence, which, in the curiosity of some and anxiety of others to hear what he would say, was easily secured. He began to speak to them in the mongrel Hebrew, which had at that time become the vernacular language of Palestine, not only because it would be understood by a larger number than the Greek, but because it would in some degree conciliate the people to be addressed in their own language. He had not in this miscalculated, for, "when they heard him speak in the Hebrew tongue, they kept the more silence."

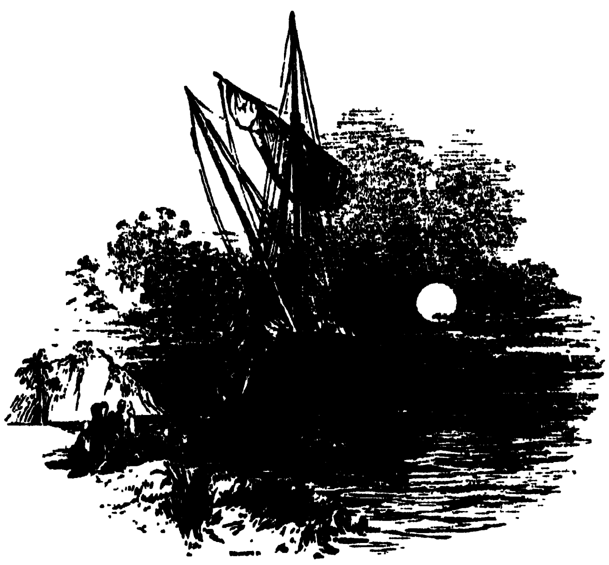
The charge against Paul was that he had everywhere endeavoured to prejudice the minds of men against the Jews, their law and their temple. To meet this charge, he showed that he had been born a Jew, and had enjoyed the advantages of a first-rate Jewish education under Gamaliel, the most eminent of their doctors. He then recounted the circumstances of his conversion, with the reasons which led him to believe that he was called to preach the Gospel. He proceeded to state the reasons why he went among the Gentiles, and evidently designed to vindicate his conduct there: but he was not allowed to finish his address; for no sooner did he begin to open the subject of his mission to the Gentiles, than the mob,



1189. - Fall from Upper Chamber.
Cwympo o Oruwch Ystafell.



1190.—Debarkation.
Dadlwythiad Llong.



1191.—Kneeling on the Shore.
Penlinio ar y Traeth.



1192.—Eastern House.
Ty Dwyreiniol.



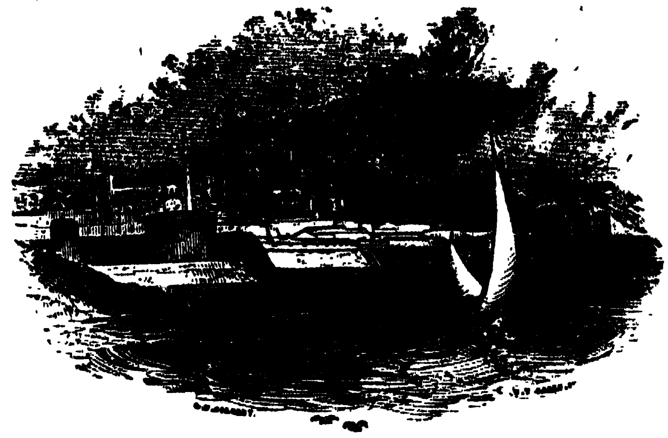
1193.—Conducted along the Shore.
Arwain ar hyd Glan y Môr.



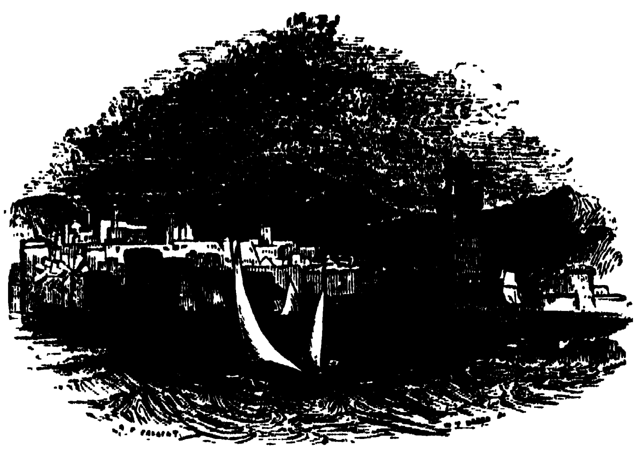
1194.—Mount Zion.
Mynydd Sion.



1195.—Eastern Ships in Port.
Llongau Dwyreiniol mewn Porthladd.



1196.—General View of Famagusta, Cyprus.
Golygfa gyffredinol ar Ffamagusta.



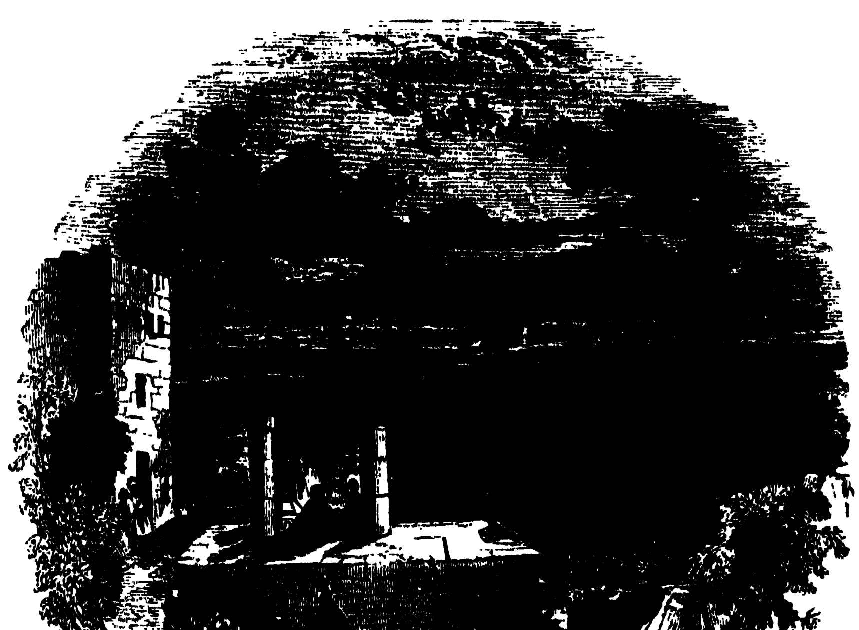
1197.—Rhodes.



1198.—Tyre.
Tyrus.



1199.—View of Cerini, Cyprus.
Golygfa ar Cerini, Cyprus.



1200.—Ptolemais.

"which had given him audience to that word," broke forth into a storm of human fury, crying at the top of their voices—"Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should live!" and in the madness of their rage they cast off their outer garments, as intending to stone him, and tossed about their arms, throwing dust into the air. From that frightful scene the tribune withdrew the apostle into the castle; and all that had passed being unintelligible to him, he was proceeding, according to the custom of the Romans, to extort from him a confession as to the cause of all this tumult by scourging, when Paul saved himself from this ignominy by declaring himself a Roman citizen. It was however still necessary to the tribune, in the discharge of his public duty, to ascertain the real nature of the demonstration raised against the apostle; and he therefore on the next day summoned a meeting of the Sanhedrim, or great judicial council of the nation, before which he produced his prisoner.

After a brief but earnest survey of the body before which he stood, Paul began his address, "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God unto this day." Offended at this bold declaration, Ananias, who had been formerly high-priest, and who, during the vacancy which at present existed, discharged the functions of that high office, commanded the men that stood near the prisoner to smite him on the mouth. Warmed by this indignity, the apostle cried out, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall! for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?" Those who stood by reproved him for speaking so disrespectfully to "God's high-priest;" on which Paul, who knew that the office was really vacant, declared he knew not that Ananias was the high-priest, and had not accosted him in that capacity. The survey which Paul had made of the assembly assured him that it was composed partly of Sadducees and partly of Pharisees, the latter greatly preponderating. Then in order to secure the voice of the majority of the judges to his side, he availed himself of that means for the victory of truth, which has often been used against it—the *divide et impera* in a good sense. He enlisted to his side the bias to that truth by the acknowledgment of which the majority of the council really approached nearer to him than the few who denied it, in order to produce a division in the assembly. "Men and brethren," he said, "I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question." This bore on the great point of controversy between the Pharisees and Sadducees: and these words at once had the effect of uniting the former in favour of the prisoner, and of involving them in a hot debate with the Sadducees, to whom the officiating high-priest himself belonged. The Pharisees became at once unable to find any fault in him. If he had said that the spirit of a deceased person or that an angel had appeared to him (alluding to what he had said concerning the appearance of the risen Jesus), whatever he might mean by that, or whatever he averred, whether true or not, they did not pretend to determine, nor trouble themselves about it; still the thing was possible, and afforded no ground on which to criminate him. In the confusion that arose, the Roman tribune, who must have been much struck and not much edified by the scene, took upon him to withdraw the prisoner, for whose safety among the eager disputants he began to entertain apprehensions.

In the following night, the apostle was cheered by a vision which assured him that he was in the path of duty, and that all these confusions were but accomplishing the purposes of the Divine will: "Be of good cheer, Paul;" were the words of encouragement which he heard; "for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou do also at Rome." We have now to see how this was brought about.

The enemies of Paul now despaired of accomplishing his destruction through the ordinary forms of judicature; and some of the more desperate of them resolved to remove him by a more summary and certain process. Not less than forty of them bound themselves by a vow not to eat or drink till they had destroyed him. They made this known to some members of the Sanhedrim, and prevailed upon them to require the tribune again to produce him before the council, intending to fall upon him and murder him on the way. This plot however became known to Paul's nephew, and was by him imparted to the tribune, who forthwith resolved to clear his hands of the business by sending the prisoner off under a guard to Cæsarea, that the whole matter might be examined by the procurator Felix. Knowing the desperate character of the men who were leagued against Paul, the escort was made very strong, consisting of nearly five hundred men, and departing with the prisoner at nightfall, they by a quick march had reached Antipatris, which was thirty-five miles from Jerusalem, by the morning. Immediate danger being here past, the soldiers and spearmen returned, leaving the horsemen to escort the apostle the remaining twenty-five miles to Cæsarea.

Felix, the Roman procurator, before whom Paul was brought on his arrival at Cæsarea, was originally a slave, as was also his brother Pallas, of the emperor Claudius, and received their freedom from him. This weak emperor was in fact governed by his freedmen, of whom Pallas held the highest place in his favour, and Felix himself was very dear to him. This personal favour of the emperor, coupled with the influence of Pallas, procured him high and profitable employment. He first received promotion in the army; and while serving in Syria, he rendered himself so acceptable to the Jews, that on the recall of Cumanus they solicited and obtained the appointment of Felix to the vacant government. They soon had reason to repent their choice. It is a saying in the East, that no man is so hard a master as he who has been once a slave; and this proved true in the case of Felix. As governor, he displayed a very different character from that in which he had first appeared; and the Jews soon had cause to groan under his cruelty, injustice, and avarice. This man's wife, Drusilla, was a daughter of Herod Agrippa, and sister of the "King Agrippa" mentioned below. She had left her husband Azizus, King of Emesa, who had submitted to the initiatory rite of Judaism to obtain her, and joined herself to the Roman governor, and for his sake renounced Judaism, even as her former husband had renounced paganism for hers. This absolute want of principle in high quarters strikingly illustrates the corruption of manners which had at this time overspread the land.

On the arrival of Paul at Cæsarea, the escort surrendered him to the governor, who declined to adjudicate upon the case till his accusers should arrive from Jerusalem. In five days they arrived in great force, with Ananias at their head, and accompanied by one Tertullus, a Roman advocate, whom, being themselves but imperfectly acquainted with the Roman law, they had engaged to state their case. The accusation which the Sanhedrim, by their counsel, brought against Paul, was the only one which they could with any show of reason have made—namely, that he everywhere disturbed the Jews in the enjoyment of the privileges secured to them by the Roman law, the peaceful exercise of their religious worship; that he excited disturbances and divisions among them, and that he had at length even desecrated the temple. The tribune at Jerusalem was also accused of having unduly interfered to prevent them from exercising judgment upon him according to the privileges secured to them by law. This was the amount of the charge which the orator urged against the apostle. Paul answered it in a very solid manner; and Felix, who was by no means disposed to meddle in the internal disputes of the Jews, and perceiving that no offence tangible to the Roman law could be brought against the accused, broke up the court without announcing any decision. He would in fact have dismissed the prisoner, if he had not hoped, as was his practice, to make justice venal, by obtaining money from him or his friends. He therefore detained him in the easy custody of a centurion, with the privilege of free intercourse with his friends. He afterwards saw him several times, once with his notorious mate Drusilla, who seems to have had a wish to hear something of the new sect from one of its leading men. The undaunted apostle availed himself of this hearing to discourse before the unprincipled but powerful Felix, and the equally unprincipled but very beautiful Drusilla, of such unpalatable subjects as "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come;" and this he did with such force and eloquence that the hard conscience of the governor was touched, he trembled in his high place, and abruptly closed the audience by saying that he would hear the rest—"at a more convenient season."

Paul remained in custody, as he was not willing to purchase his freedom and thereby bring suspicion upon himself and the holy cause to which his life was devoted. Therefore Felix, who was at that time unwilling to disoblige the Jews without a strong pecuniary inducement, left him still in custody when he was recalled to Rome.

Paul had been in custody two years when Porcius Festus, the new procurator, arrived in Palestine, and proceeded to Jerusalem. While in that city the high-priest and other leading men among the Jews brought the case of Paul under his notice, and desired that he might be brought back to Jerusalem to be tried there. Their intention was, it appears, to employ a set of murderous ruffians, who might at that time be had in any number for money, to waylay and destroy him. Festus probably got intelligence of this design, and, feeling it his duty to protect a Roman citizen, answered that he was himself about to proceed to Cæsarea, and that they could then go also and appear against the prisoner before his tribunal. With this they were obliged to be content.

SUNDAY XLVIII.—BIBLE HISTORY.

IN the book which bears his name Ezra does not himself particularly record any of his acts, excepting the measures which he took to ensure the removal of the foreign and idolatrous women, whom many of the people, and even of the priests and Levites, had married; and by such marriages had been insensibly led into much sin against God, and against the first principles of the Mosaical institutions. When Ezra was first informed of this, the horror which he manifested was well calculated to impress the people with the enormity of their offence. He says:—"When I heard this thing I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonied." At the evening sacrifice he arose from his stupor, and having again rent his robes he fell upon his knees and spread out his hands before God, confessing the iniquity of his people, and imploring forgiveness for them. The whole congregation was deeply affected, even to tears; and the leading men expressed their readiness to concur in any measures he might deem suited to meet this great evil. On this a proclamation was issued for all Jews who had married foreign women to appear in three days at Jerusalem, under pain of forfeiture of their goods. The large assembly which responded to the call evinced the extent of the evil. Ezra addressed them earnestly, and convinced them of their wrong-doing; but as the autumnal rains were set in, and flooded every open place in Jerusalem, he was content to take their solemn promise to put away their strange wives, as well as their children by them, allowing them time for giving effect to their engagement. Ezra and others formed a court at Jerusalem; and at appointed times the inhabitants of the several cities who were implicated in this matter, repaired thither accompanied by the elders and magistrates of their several towns, and submitted their cases separately to the judgment of the court. After sitting nearly three months the court completed its labours, and the chosen people were then deemed to be purged from this stain.

While Ezra was thus labouring among his brethren in Jerusalem, a danger came from a quarter quite unexpected, which threatened to involve the whole nation in utter ruin. This event is minutely recorded in the book of Esther, which will require us to look backward a few years, that the circumstances may be clearly understood.

In the third year of his reign the king made a great feast, or rather a succession of feasts, to all the great lords and princes of his empire. The whole was finished by a separate feast held in the court or garden of the palace, to all the nobles, councillors, and great officers in immediate employment at the court. The description of this establishment is very interesting to the student of ancient customs; and the more closely they are in this instance examined, the more they are found to resemble those which the same country still exhibits,—affording a remarkable example of the permanent character of Oriental ideas and usages. The magnificence of this entertainment seems to have greatly exceeded all that went before. The tessellated pavement of the court was of red, blue, black, and white marble; and the splendid curtains and coverings of white, green, and blue, by which the court was for the occasion turned into a pavilion, were fastened to pillars of marble by rings of silver, and by cords of purple and fine linen; and the couches on which the guests reclined were framed in silver and gold.

The guests drank "royal wine," which was the wine of Helbon (now Aleppo), from vessels of gold, of elaborate workmanship; and we are informed that they drank their wine "according to the law," which was, it seems, an excellent rule laid down at the first, that none should be forced to drink more than he liked. It does not seem that they much needed compulsion in this matter, for it is manifest that the monarch and his guests had all drunk quite enough when the circumstance occurred to which these preliminaries lead. There is no doubt about this, for it is expressly said that "the king's heart was merry with wine." It seems that in their cups these great personages began to talk about the beauty of their women. The king vaunted of the supreme loveliness of his queen, Vashti, and at length, to prove his assertions, resolved to produce her unveiled before them. This gross breach of all Oriental proprieties, which preclude a woman from showing her face to strangers, could not have occurred to any one in his proper senses, and is a clear sign to mark how far the great Ahasuerus was gone in drink.

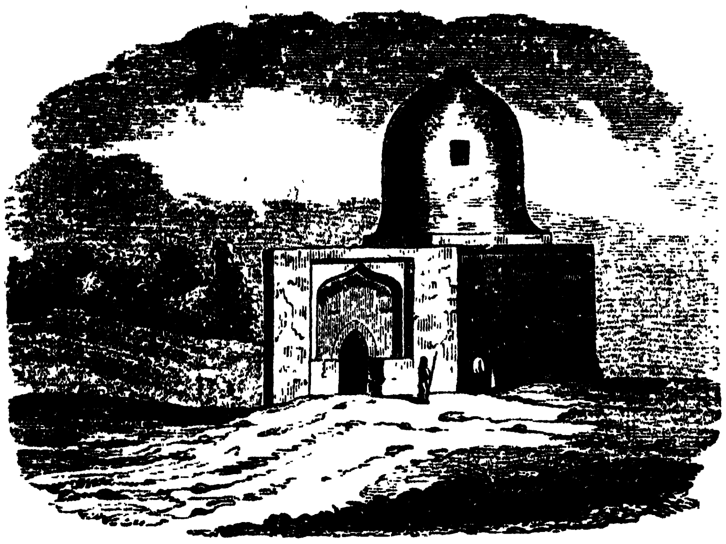
The queen Vashti was at this time giving a grand entertainment to the women of the harem; and when the eunuchs unwelcomely appeared with the strange and unexpected summons to the presence of the king and his courtiers, her womanly modesty and dignity was shocked, and she very properly refused to go. This gave the affair quite a new aspect. The man whose slightest expression of will was a law in that vast empire, had been publicly disobeyed by a woman. An earthquake could not have created a stronger sensation in the palaces of Shusan; and all the grandees partook of the royal indignation and alarm. The fact could not but be bruited abroad, and how, hereafter, could any man expect to be obeyed in his own house, after it became known that the king himself had been disobeyed? The matter was too grave to be settled in a summary manner, and the king thought proper to seek the advice of his state council. Memucan, one of the council, very clearly expressed the feeling we have described—the alarm at the ill effect of the queen's example upon "the ladies of Media and Persia," if the crime were suffered to go unpunished; and he proposed that Vashti should no more come into the king's presence, and that her royal state should be given "to another that is better than she." This was agreed to, as was also the further and very sage proposal of this same great councillor, that the king should put forth a decree in all the languages of his great empire, enacting that "every man should bear rule in his own house," and that "all the wives should give to their husbands honour, both to great and small."

History has not recorded the effect of this decree upon "the ladies of Media and Persia." Vashti, was, however, deposed from her high place, and all the provinces of the empire were ransacked for a suitable successor. The fairest damsels of the empire were, on a hint from the court, taken and sent to the harem by the provincial and other governors; and from the number thus collected, after they had become the inmates of the royal harem, the selection was to be made. Time was consumed in this; but at length it proved that of all the damsels thus brought together, none was so agreeable to the king as a young Jewess named Hadessah or Esther, who was accordingly advanced to the high but precarious honour of "queen," or rather, of chief lady of the royal harem.

Esther was an orphan, who had been brought up by her uncle Mordecai, who, when her father and mother were dead, "took her for his own daughter." Mordecai was of the tribe of Benjamin, descended from a man who had been exiled with King Jehoiachin. He seems to have been one of the officers about the royal court, as his duty kept him in attendance at the gate of the royal palace. In this capacity he became privy to a plot between two of the chamberlains to assassinate the king; but he contrived to make it known to Esther, and through her to the king, whereby the design was frustrated, and the traitors brought to punishment.

The person who became highest in favour at court was an Amalekite named Haman. Mindful of the old enmity between the races of Israel and Amalek, and of the ancient wrongs which Israel had sworn never to pardon or forget,—Mordecai remained erect among the crowd of nobles, courtiers, and officers who waited in the palace courts, and who rendered their bending homage to the great man as he passed. This occurred so often, that the eye of Haman at length marked the person of this unyielding Jew, and none but those who are aware of the importance which the Orientals still at this day attach to external marks of respect, can apprehend that dire wrath which filled his mind at this studied disrespect. When he learned that Mordecai was a Hebrew, he could not but be aware of the class of feelings by which he was actuated; and if an Israelite had cause to hate an Amalekite, had not an Amalekite as good cause to hate a Jew? Had not the Hebrews sworn to exterminate the Amalekites; and to the extent of their power had not they done so? Had not that power which was once so great, that "higher than Agag" had become a proverbial description of the highest human greatness—had it not been broken and reduced to nought by the conquering sword of Hebrew kings? And their hate was not yet appeased; for this one Jew could be but regarded as the exponent of the feeling which burned in every Hebrew bosom against the line of Amalek.

Thoughts like these must have dwelt upon the mind of Haman, for they enable us to discover, which we cannot do under any other explanation, a train of ideas and feelings which might in an ill-regulated mind lead to the resolution which Haman formed, to use the vast power which the confidence of the king left in his hands for the destruction of the whole Hebrew race.



1201.—Tomb of Mordecai and Esther.
Beddrod Mordecai ac Esther.



1202.—The Rain.
Y Gwlaw.



1203.—Arab Tents.
Pebyll Arabaidd.



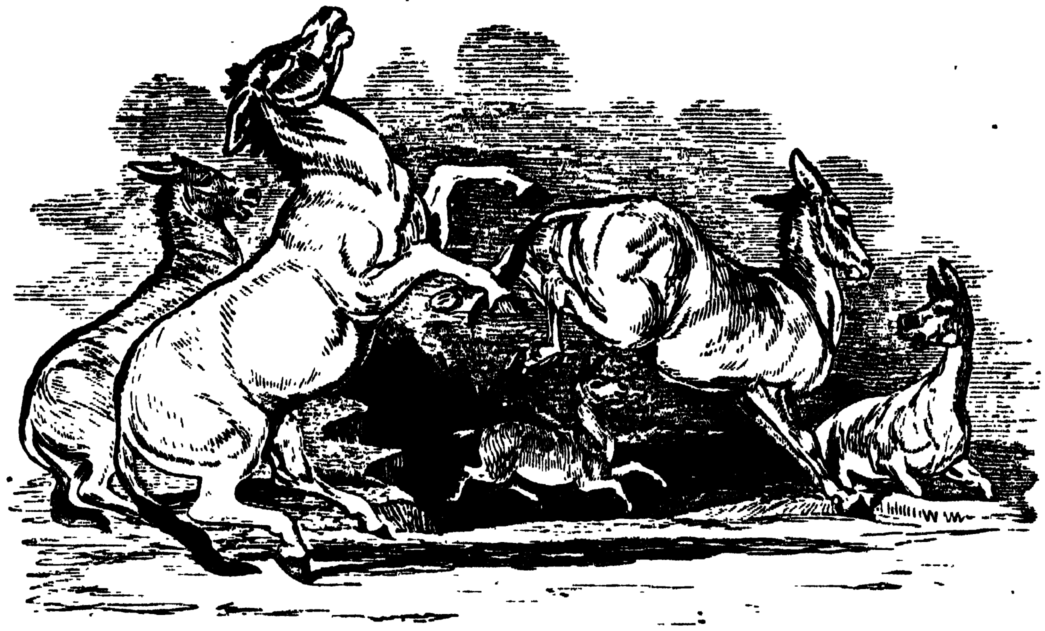
1204.—Arab Robbers. (From Laborde.)
Ysbeilwyr Arabaidd. (O Laborde.)



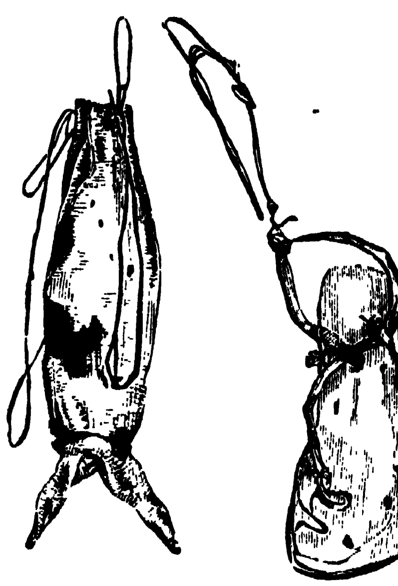
1205.—Arab of Edom.
Arabiad o Edom.



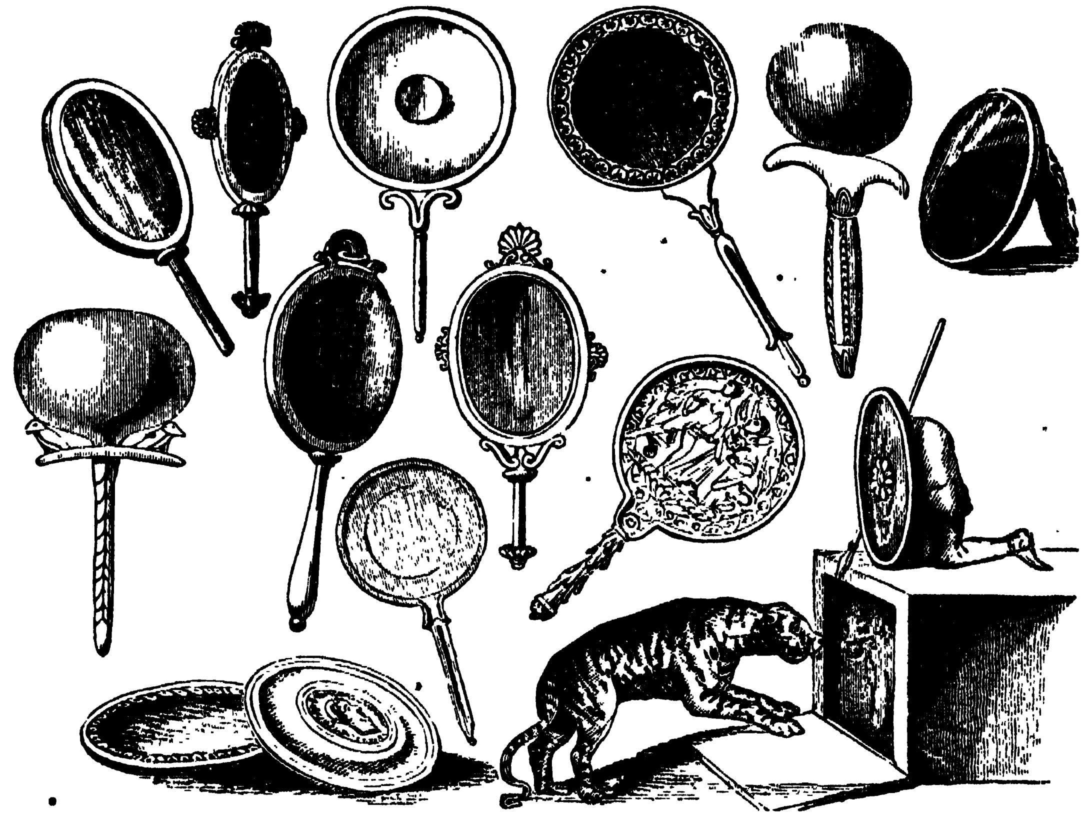
1207.—Girl pouring Wine from Leathern Bottle.
Llangoes yn tywallt gwin o Gostrel Groen.



1206.—Wild Asses.
Asynod Gwylltion.



1208.—Skin Vessels.
Llestri Crwyn.



1209.—Ancient Metal Mirrors.—Job xxxvii. 18.
Hen Ddrychau Metel.



1210.—Storm at Sea.
Ystôrm ar y Môr.



1211.—Storm at Sea.
Ystôrm ar y Môr.

SUNDAY XLIX.—JOB.

WHEN Job had concluded his final argument, and no answer was given by his friends, the debate would seem to have come to a natural, but not very satisfactory close. But the scene, when thus about to close, is, with great skill in the poet, re-opened by a stranger, or at least by one of whose presence we were not previously apprised, who steps forward as a sort of arbiter or mediator in the controversy. This is Elihu, whose reasons for not interfering before, and for then coming forward, are well declared by himself:—

> "I am young, and ye are old ;
> Therefore I was afraid,
> And durst not make known to you.
> I said, 'Days should speak my opinion,
> And multitudes of years should teach wisdom.'
> But it is the divine spirit in man,
> Even the inspiration of the Almighty, that giveth him understanding.
> Great men are not always wise,
> Nor do the aged always understand what is right.
> Therefore I pray you listen to me ;
> I also will declare my opinion."

After this he proceeds to express his dissatisfaction with both parties; with Job "because he had pronounced himself righteous rather than God," that is, because he had so vehemently defended his own cause as to seem in some measure to arraign the justice of God; and with the three friends "because they had not found an answer, and yet had condemned Job," that is, they had settled it in their own minds that Job was impious and wicked, although they had nothing specific to object against his assertions of his own innocence, or upon which they might safely ground their accusation. This is the gist of the somewhat diffuse and not very coherent argument which occupies six chapters (xxxii.—xxxvii.).

His eagerness to express his views of the debate, after listening so long to arguments which he considered unsatisfactory, is very ingenuously acknowledged, and aptly characterized by himself:—

> "I am full of matter ;
> The spirit within constraineth me.
> Behold my bosom is as wine that hath no vent ;
> Like bottles of new wine, it is bursting.
> I will speak that I may be relieved."

This is one of the many allusions which the Scriptures contain to the leathern vessels, which were used not only for conveying water, but for holding wine. The use of such vessels, formed of the hides of oxen, goats, or kids, is dictated by the warmth of Eastern climates, and by the absence of wheel-carriage. Casks of wood are unsuited for holding liquids in warm climates, and neither such nor earthen jars (which are sometimes used for *storing* wine) would be convenient for ca. iage on the backs of mules and camels. Hence skins continue to be the most appropriate and most fitting, as they are the most ancient vessels for this purpose. Some of the considerations which dictated their use were not alone applicable to warm climates; for the use of leathern bottles for wine was by no means unknown to the Romans, and even existed at a later period in the regions of northern Europe. There are traces of this use even in our own country. In thi. case the portability of the skins must have been the main recommendation. In the use of leathern bottles for wine it behoved the parties to be careful that the bottles into which new wine was poured were not old and worn, as the fermentation would be very apt to burst the bottles. It is to this fact that Elihu alludes, and it more than once supplies a striking image to our Saviour (Matt. ix. 17).

Among the figures which Elihu crowds into his discourse, the description of a rising storm, with which he concludes—and which he produces to illustrate the power of the Almighty—is the most sublime. This vivid picture is not only admirable in itself, but is introduced most appropriately to harbinger the presence of the Deity himself, whose voice, while Elihu is yet speaking, is heard from amid the tempest.

The necessity for this interference arose from the partial and imperfect views which all the speakers had taken, and from which Elihu himself, with all his vaunted discretion, was not exempt.

In the Divine address, which occupies the remainder of the book, the Almighty is represented as stooping from his high and holy place to pass a final judgment on this great controversy. Job himself had earnestly desired this result, without expecting it; and now it was come; now the just and wise Judge, with whom he had lodged his appeal, appeared to decide between him and his opponents. The patriarch was not, however, at first addressed in that language of encouragement and approbation which his consciousness of integrity led him to anticipate. He had defended a good cause in an improper manner; he had "darkened counsel by words without knowledge;" and therefore it was first needful to bring him into a proper state of mind by reproving his complaints respecting the ways of Providence. This reproof is conveyed not by an explanation or vindication of the ways of God's providence, but by convincing Job of his inability to judge of them. He who had spoken so rashly of the Divine counsels is called upon to give an explanation of some of the works of nature which were constantly presented to his view; of the nature and structure of the earth, the sea, the light, and the animal kingdom. If he were unable to explain any one of the most common phenomena of nature, it followed that he was guilty of great presumption in tasking the secret counsels and moral government of God. This occupies the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters. The description of the wild-ass, which occurs at the beginning of the thirty-ninth chapter (5—8), is especially worthy of note:—

> "Who hath sent forth the wild-ass free ?
> Or hath loosed the bands of the wild-ass ?
> To whom I have given the wilderness for his house,
> And the barren land for his dwelling.
> He scorneth the tumult of the city,
> And heedeth not the clamour of the driver ;
> The range of the mountain is his pasture ;
> He seeketh after every green thing."

Much effect is here produced by the incidental contrast between the condition of the wild and the tame ass. The latter is the familiar beast of burden amidst the tumult of cities, and therefore it is said of the wild ass that *he* "scorneth the tumult of the city ;" the tame ass also is not in Eastern cities *led*, but is urged or impelled from behind by the staff and voice of the *driver; whence* it is said of the wild ass that *he* "heedeth not the clamour of the driver."

Some points may for a few moments arrest our attention before we proceed to the others.

The wild variety of the ass, supposed to be denoted here and elsewhere in Scripture by the name Para, is very distinct from the common ass, although with sufficient general resemblance to suggest the contrast in their condition which our quotation involves. This wild species stands much higher in the limbs than the common ass; its legs are longer and more slender, and it is altogether a more graceful and symmetrical animal, with a greater predominance of equinine form and qualities than the domestic ass exhibits, and having upon the whole less resemblance to it than to a very fine mule. It is of a silvery grey colour with a broad coffee-coloured stripe extending from the mane to the tail, and crossed at the shoulder by the same transverse bar which the domestic variety exhibits. The *head* of those found west of the Euphrates is said to be much finer than that of the wild ass (Goorkhud) in Persia and in more eastern regions, and that the animal generally improves west of the Euphrates, being perhaps in its most perfect condition in the Bahr-el-Abaid in Africa. There is no ground for the statement that the wild ass does not exist west of the Euphrates. Many travellers prior to the last century noticed its presence in Palestine; and, according to Burckhardt, it is still seen in Arabia Petræa—the very country in which the scene of the book of Job appears to be laid. He states the Arabs hunt them and eat their flesh, but not before strangers. "They sell their skins and hoofs to the pedlars of Damascus and the people of the Hauran. The hoofs furnish materials for rings, which are worn by the peasants on their thumbs or under their arm-pits, as a remedy against rheumatism." In Persia the wild ass is a favourite object of chace, and its flesh is esteemed as venison, and is served up on high occasions at royal tables; few Europeans can, however, bring themselves to like it.

There are several allusions in Scripture to the wildness of this animal, so that its name came to be proverbially applied to characterise men of perverse and incorrigible character. So in this same book we find, "Man would be wise, though he be born a wild-ass colt." In like manner the Arabs still describe an indocile and contumacious person as an "ass of the desert."

SUNDAY XLIX.—BIBLE HISTORY.



NOT a little remarkable is the mode in which Haman proceeded to realize his object. He took an occasion of mentioning to the king that there was dispersed through his empire a people (not naming them) "whose laws are diverse from all people, neither keep they the king's laws;" he hence argued that it was detrimental to the interests of the crown that such a people should be suffered to exist; and he, therefore, recommended that they should be destroyed. The only reasonable objection which could be urged would be the loss to the revenue of the capitation tax which these people paid: and, to obviate this, Haman offered to deposit in the royal treasury not less than ten thousand talents of silver. The offer of this immense sum, which, computed by the Babylonian talent, is equal to two millions sterling—and that for the mere purpose of gratifying a bloody whim—evinces the vast wealth which such favourites of the crown under the ancient monarchies were able to accumulate; and this is the more remarkable when we consider that this high post was, as in this case, often occupied by foreigners and slaves, or by the descendants of such. The king declined this offer, but consented to what he ought to have declined. With culpable, but truly Oriental, indifference in a matter which concerned the lives of so many thousands of people, he took the signet ring from his finger and consigned it to Haman, by which act he authorized him to issue in the king's name whatever orders in this matter he might think proper.

Thus empowered, Haman hurried the royal scribes in preparing copies, in different languages, of a decree which he drew up to accomplish his fell intentions, and which were despatched by swift couriers to all the provinces of that mighty empire, which extended "from India to Ethiopia." This decree directed that all the Jews, wherever found, were to be slain in one day, "both young and old, little children and women." The one day appointed for this horrid massacre was the thirteenth of the month Adar, and the people were incited to become the willing agents of the slaughter by the slayer being authorized to take to himself the spoil of the slain.

It will be seen that the desire of Haman to make the destined stroke complete, instant, and effectual, induced him to take measures which required time to bring into action; and during that time, in the wise providence of God, circumstances occurred which Haman could not have foreseen, and which brought his deep-laid scheme to nothing.

When the decree was first put forth in the metropolis, "the city Shushan was perplexed;"—but "the king and Haman sat down to drink."

No sooner did Mordecai become acquainted with the decree than he "rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and bitter cry." This appears to have been not only the expression of his consternation in the usual way, but to have been designed to draw the attention of the Jews to the extent of their danger, and to rouse them to pray to God for deliverance from the frightful doom which hung over the chosen race.

Esther within the harem was as one dead to all that happened beyond its walls. She knew nothing of the evil that threatened her people, and Mordecai could have no direct access to her or communication with her. Her slaves and eunuchs, however, knew of her relationship to Mordecai; and his conduct was duly reported to her by them. This was doubtless partly his object in giving vent to such public demonstrations of his grief. For Esther no sooner heard of the sorrow her beloved uncle manifested, than she sent Hatach, one of the royal eunuchs, to inquire the cause of his grief. This gave Mordecai the desired opportunity of apprising the queen of these transactions, and of urging her, by every consideration dear to a Hebrew heart, to exert her influence with the king in subverting the plot of the bloodthirsty favourite. Esther was greatly shocked; but surrounded by the iron barriers of etiquette, which in the Persian court were "strong as death and cruel as the grave," she demurred as to the practicability of her interference. No one, not even the queen, could venture, without danger of death, to appear uncalled in that portion of the royal palace which the king occupied; and for her to quit her harem and enter the forbidden precincts would peril her life, unless the capricious king might chance, in a fit of good humour, to extend to her the golden sceptre of his mercy. When this difficulty was made known to Mordecai, his answer called her to the high resolves which became a daughter of Israel, and he plainly intimated that it was her duty to risk her life for the deliverance of her people. He with some sternness warned her that if she declined this high vocation, God would certainly raise up help to his people in some other quarter, while she and her father's house would perish: "And who knoweth," he added, "whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" On receiving this answer through Hatach, Esther hesitated no longer; she rose to what she believed to be her destiny, and showed herself equal to the great task which had devolved upon her. She sent one message more to her uncle, desiring him to call upon the Jews in Shushan (Susa) to devote themselves to fasting and prayer to God for his blessing upon her terrible emprise: "I also and my maidens," she said, "will fast likewise: and then will I go into the king, which is not according to the law;—and if I perish, I perish."

On the third day from this Esther put on her royal apparel, and passing from the harem, presented herself in the court of the king's own house, in front of the open hall or divan where the monarch was seated upon his throne. When the king beheld her alone in all her imperial beauty—for she had come unattended, that her maidens might not share her danger—he was moved by the danger she had incurred to gain access to his presence, and, extending the golden sceptre towards her, said, "What wilt thou, queen Esther, and what is thy request?" What a trying moment was that! what a relief in his gracious act and words to the full heart of one not by nature or education suited to daring acts, but who had wrought up her woman's heart to the mighty task which had fallen upon her! She knew that she was safe, that all danger to herself was passed, and that through her her people might yet be delivered. She advanced and touched the golden sceptre; but ventured no other request than that the king and Haman would that day come to a banquet which she had prepared.

The king knew that this banquet was but preliminary to some request that Esther had to prefer: and accordingly, when he honoured it with his presence, he asked her, "What wilt thou, queen Esther, and what is thy request? Even to the half of my kingdom it shall be performed." She answered by inviting him and Haman to another feast the ensuing day, with an intimation that she would then make known the favour she had to ask.

Haman departed that evening, elated that he was thus a second time invited to accompany the king to Esther's banquet. It filled the cup of his honours; but in that cup there was still one bitter drop—the disrespect of Mordecai; for as he passed out of the palace in this happy mood, his eye fell upon the form of that unbending Jew, who seemed posted there to rebuke his spirit, and whose eye probably glared upon him that day (knowing he had been with Esther) with some peculiar meaning, prophetic of his doom. This made him uneasy, and turned his joy to bitterness. When he reached home he reported to his wife the favours which were showered upon him; adding, as to crown all, "Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come into the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and to-morrow am I invited unto her also with the king:" but he continued with bitterness, "Yet all this availeth me nothing so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate." On which his wife and friends advised him to prepare a gallows fifty cubits high, "and to-morrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon—then go thou merrily unto the banquet." Haman determined to take this advice; and in the morning early, he was, as his duty required, at the palace, to receive the king's commands for the day—with an intention of also making his small request in the matter of Mordecai.

In the wise providence of God it was ordered that in this night the king had been unable to sleep; and he ordered, therefore, that the chronicles of his kingdom should be brought and read before him. The hand of the reader was guided by an unseen power to that part of the volume in which the plot against the king's life by two of his chamberlains was recorded, as well as its disclosure by Mordecai. Then, said the king, "What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this?" to which an officer in attendance replied, "There hath nothing been done for him." Struck with this neglect of so great a service, the monarch determined to repair the wrong forthwith. He directed that any minister in attendance in the antechamber might be called. This was Haman, come to ask the king to hang this very Mordecai.

The king asked, What shall be done to the man whom the king



1212.—A King supported.
Brenin yn cael ei gynnal.



1213.—Persian King enthroned. (From an ancient Sculpture, engraved in Ker Porter's Travels.)
Gorseddiad Brenin Persiaidd. (O hen Gerflun, a gerfiwyd yn Ker Porter's Travels.)



1215.—Egyptian Seal-rings.
Sel-fodrwyau Aiphtaidd.



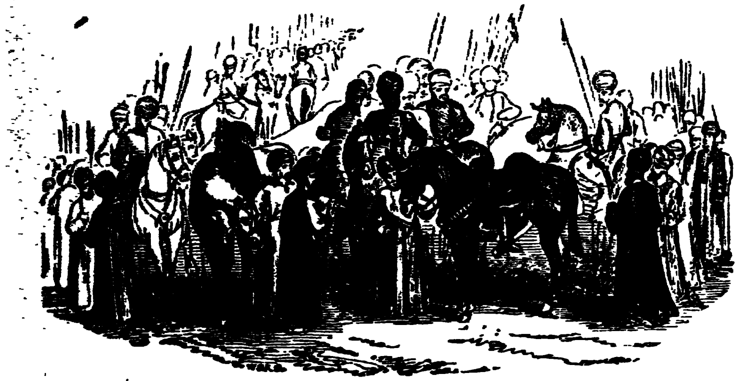
1217.—Mordecai and Esther.
Mordecai ac Esther.



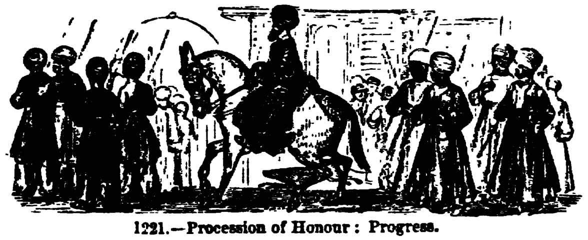
1216.—Royal Palace at Ispahan.
Palas Brenhinol yn Ispahan.



1214.—Persian King walking. (From Ker Porter's Travels.)
Brenin Persiaidd yn rhodio. (O Ker Porter's Travels.)



1220.—Procession of Honour: Start.
Gorymdaith o Anrhydedd: Y Cychwyniad.



1221.—Procession of Honour: Progress.
Gorymdaith o Anrhydedd: Y Mynediad.



1218.—Esther before King Ahasuerus. (Poussin.)
Esther ger bron Brenin Ahasferus.



1219.—The King's Horse. (From a Sculpture near Shapor.)
March y Brenin. (O Gerflun yn agos i Shapor.)



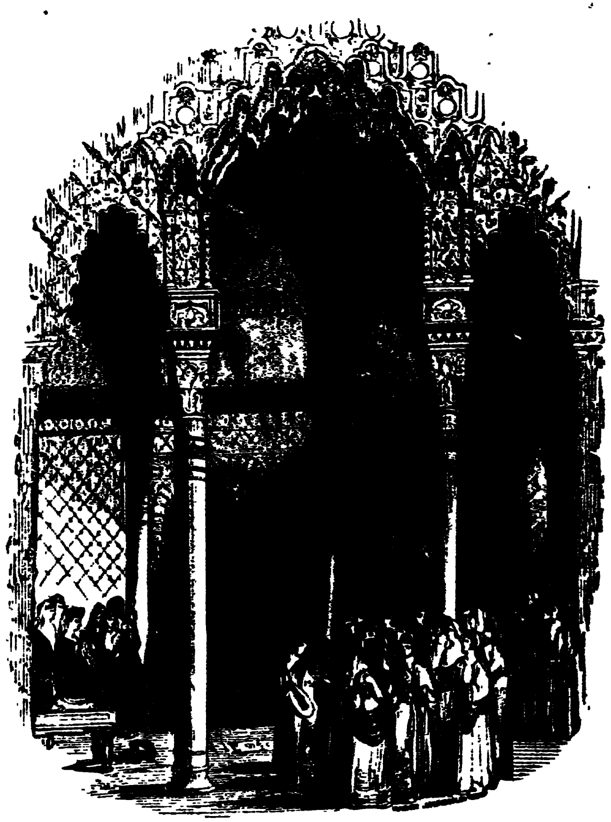
1222.—Procession of Honour: Returning.
Gorymdaith o Anrhydedd: Y Dychweliad.



1223.—Dress of Honour.
Gwisg o Anrhydedd.



1224.—Ceremony of investing a Persian with a Dress of Honour.
Y Ddefod o wisgo Persiad gyda Gwisg o Anrhydedd.



1225.—The Harem.
Y Harem.

delighteth to honour?" **Now Haman had not the slightest suspicion that the king could delight to honour any one but himself, and his answer under this impression betrays the inordinate pride and vanity of his heart.** He advised that this favoured man should be arrayed in the most illustrious dress of honour—raiment that the king himself had worn—by the hands of the king's most noble princes—and that thus arrayed he should be by them conducted on horseback through the city, while the heralds proclaimed before him—"Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour." Was ever man cast down from the pinnacle of his pride into the lowest deeps of mortification so abruptly as Haman, when the king told him, as one of "the king's most noble princes" to whom he himself had assigned this task, to "go and do as thou hast said to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth in the king's gate!"—to Mordecai, the man in all the world whom he most hated, and whom he had that very morning intended to get hanged! But he had only to obey. With trembling hands he invested with imperial robes the man he would much sooner have torn in pieces; and conducted him through the city with all the state and ceremony which he had intended for himself.

These events, strange as they appear to us, are eminently characteristic of Persia; and so enduring are the essential features of Oriental character and usages, that there is scarcely a single circumstance which might not in the same country have occurred at the present day without any marked contrariety to existing manners. The dress of honour, and, above all, one that the king has worn, is still the highest personal distinction which a Persian courtier desires.

Haman was no sooner relieved from the terrible restraint imposed upon him, than he hastened to his home "mourning and having his head covered." When he made known to his wife and friends the cause of his grief, he found but little consolation from them. From the sudden and extraordinary elevation of one whom Haman had destined for the gallows—they seem to have argued the special interposition of a higher power in his behalf, and to have inferred that the star of Haman was destined to grow pale before that of Mordecai. "If," said they, "Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt certainly fall before him." They were still speaking when the royal chamberlains arrived to hurry Haman off to queen Esther's banquet.

The king and his favourite proceeded together to the banquet—the former doubtless curious to know what the important matter it might be for which Esther had in the first instance perilled her life, and which she deemed it needful to introduce with so much careful preparation. Accordingly, at this banquet he asked again, "What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even unto the half of my kingdom." Esther saw that the trying moment was come, to be then taken or to be for ever lost. It was not lost. She at once poured forth the great burden of her soul in earnest supplication:—"If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let *my life* be granted to my petition, and *my people* at my request. For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, and to be slain, and to perish. If we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage." The king was thunderstruck at the charge involved in this passionate address, of a conspiracy in some quarter against the life of the queen and her people; and he exclaimed with energy—"Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?" The queen answered—"The adversary and enemy is—this wicked Haman!" At that word the king rose from his seat, and walked forth into the garden. Haman saw from his manner and the kindling of his eye that all was lost unless he could turn that precious moment to account in softening the indignation of Esther. He rose from his place and drew near to her, and in earnest entreaty sought to disperse the dark wrath which he saw gathering around him. But she gave no sign of peace; and in his agony he fell, in a state of only half consciousness, upon the low divan whereon the queen reclined. At that moment the king entered, and in the blindness of his passion drew the worst inferences, from the position in which he was found, as to his intention in approaching the queen. The exclamation which rose to his lips, announced to the ever ready eunuchs that the doom of Haman was sealed; and they approached him and covered his face—for it was the etiquette in Persia that no criminal might look upon the king. **Every miserable eunuch now felt free to hasten the descent of the falling favourite; and one of them at that moment mentioned—"Behold also the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman hath made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standing in the house of Haman."** *The sense of poetical justice supplied the king with a prompt decision; and the sentence "Hang him thereon!" went forth from his lips.* So they hanged Haman on the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai. We are satisfied with this; but are not altogether satisfied that the king, who had, by his culpable neglect of his duties and his indifference to human life, made himself a party in the crimes of Haman, should be the person to pronounce his doom. But the secret consciousness of the king that he had himself been in the wrong, only made him the more wroth against the man who had brought this unpleasant consciousness upon him by abusing his confidence

Mordecai was now introduced to the presence of the king, whom Esther had made acquainted with their relationship; and the combination of circumstances in his favour induced the king to confide to him the signet ring (or as we should say, "the seals of office") which had been given to Haman.

The great work of delivering the Hebrew people from their doom was, however, not yet accomplished. Haman was dead, but the decree of the king lived. Therefore, Esther besought him, even with tears, to complete his work by delivering her people from their still impending doom:—"For how," said she, "can I bear to see the evil that will come upon my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?" The king evinced every willingness to rectify the error into which Haman had led him; but he shrunk from the open acknowledgment of error which a directly counter decree would have involved. The words of the Persian kings were laws, and respect for them as such could only be maintained by their being made inviolable. Hence the usage which had confided this power to the king, is said to have constrained him to caution by precluding him from retracting a decree which had once been issued. All he could therefore now do, was, to authorize the Jews to stand upon their defence against those who attempted to execute the first edict. This might seem no great privilege; but in fact it served to apprise the authorities of the altered mind of the king, and intimated to them that they would win more favour by neglecting than by enforcing the first decree.

The execution of this measure was intrusted to Mordecai; and he did not deem it of small importance. Copies of the order, sealed with the king's signet, were prepared with all possible dispatch, and forwarded to all parts of the empire by couriers, who were severally mounted on the kind of animal best suited to the journey they had to perform. Those who had an ordinary journey went on horseback; those who had to traverse mountains rode on mules; and those who had to speed across wide plains and arid deserts were mounted on young camels and swift dromedaries. They were commanded to travel with the utmost speed, to anticipate the day appointed for the massacre; for in the wise providence of God, the very delay which had been afforded by the desire of Haman to make his stroke effectual, left just the time required for turning its edge aside. Haman, under a superstition about lucky and unlucky days, still common in the same country, sought a propitious day for the execution of the grand design which has rendered his memory infamous. The fourteenth day of the month Adar had been chosen by lot, and who shall say that the lot had not been determined to this day by that Divine Providence which shines throughout the book of Esther, although the name of God does not once appear in it!

The new decree saved the Jews from destruction, but did not prevent a horrid massacre of them and by them. There were many who hated the Jews, and there were others who coveted their possessions, which had been secured to those who should slay them: so that in many places the Jews had a hard fight for their lives on the fourteenth of the month Adar. On that day they very wisely assembled in bodies in the places where they resided, ready to defend themselves; and in some places they appear to have gone beyond the strict limits of self-defence; but nowhere did they touch the spoils of those who fell before them. One would think that in Shushan, in the presence of the court, no attempt to enforce the edict would be made. But it would seem that the ten sons of Haman, and others adverse to the altered state of affairs, organized an attempt to carry it into effect. The Jews, however, had the advantage, for, while it is not recorded that many of them were slain, not fewer than eight hundred of their assailants fell before them. Throughout the empire the slaughter made by the Jews amounted to not less than seventy-five thousand men. The ancient Jewish writers believe that these were chiefly Amalekites, and there can be no doubt such of this nation as were dispersed through the Persian empire would evince peculiar animosity against the Hebrew race. **At all events, one fact shines out very clear, which is, that seventy-five thousand human beings perished because the king had been careless and unguarded over his wine.**

SUNDAY XLIX.—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

PAUL was accordingly brought before the judgment-seat of Festus, as soon as the latter arrived at Cæsarea. He was very willing to please the Jews, so that he could do so without any palpable or gross injustice against one who was protected by the rights of Roman citizenship. When therefore he perceived that he could make nothing of the case as against the prisoner, he asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem and have the matter tried there. Perceiving from this that the governor was disposed to sacrifice him to his enemies, the apostle at once took his stand upon his right as a Roman citizen; and said—"I stand at Cæsar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged: *I appeal unto Cæsar!*" This settled the question; for whenever a citizen had once appealed to the imperial tribunal, all other processes were superseded, and nothing remained but to send him with all care and expedition to Rome. Paul knew this: and his determination to make this appeal was probably influenced by his previous wish and intention to preach the Gospel of Christ in the imperial city.

A short time after this, King Agrippa, the son of Herod Agrippa and grandson of Herod the Great, arrived at Cæsarea with his sister Berenice, to compliment the procurator on his arrival in his government. Agrippa had been brought up at Rome, and was much attached to the Roman people; and as he was also well instructed in the Jewish religion, Festus had the advantage of obtaining the judgment of a qualified person on the case of Paul, which was to himself unintelligible. He could not now judge him, seeing that he had appealed to Rome; but he wanted materials on which to found the report which it was necessary he should send with the appellant. It was therefore arranged that a hearing should be given to Paul before Festus, Agrippa, and Berenice.

When Agrippa intimated to Paul that he was at liberty to speak for himself, the apostle stretched forth his hand, and commenced an eloquent address by declaring the satisfaction which he felt in having his case brought before one so competent to apprehend its merits. His defence on former occasions had been before Roman magistrates, who had but little acquaintance with Jewish customs and opinions, and who listened with impatience to the discussion of subjects which they were utterly unable to understand. Thus, in order to gain a hearing, the accusers had to lay their charge and the accused his defence upon points not involving the real merits of the case, but such as were supposed to be within the grasp of the Roman judge. Paul therefore sincerely rejoiced that his case was now before one who was on the one hand well acquainted with the Jewish religion, and on the other, from having been brought up among Gentiles, was not disposed to be so much shocked as the great body of the Jews at the doctrine of Paul—that the Gentiles were not shut out from the mercies of God, and that they also had part in the Redeemer's kingdom.

The apostle knew that he was not now upon his trial, but that the impression made upon Agrippa would, through Festus, determine the tone of the report to be sent with him to Rome. He therefore gave a plain but impressive account of his education and conversion, and of his call to preach the Gospel of Christ to the Gentiles. Whenever he arrived at this point in his narrative in the presence of Jews, he had almost invariably been tumultuously interrupted; but Agrippa manifested no impatience or offence, and the apostle then proceeded—"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day witnessing both to great and small, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come:—that Christ should suffer, that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and that he should show light unto his people and to the Gentiles." Here, however, he had come upon a matter—the resurrection from the dead—which was nearly as much a stumbling-block to the Gentiles as the preaching of the Gospel beyond the Hebrew pale was to the Jews—and Festus, unwilling to seem altogether passive in the matter, and having found something which he fancied he could grasp, cried out, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning hath made thee mad." But with calm confidence the apostle answered, "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and soberness!" and, turning to Agrippa, he called upon him as a witness, since he knew well that these things had not been done secretly in a corner, but publicly in Jerusalem; and in the firm conviction that in all of which he had testified the promises of the prophets were fulfilled, he said to him:—"King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?—I know that thou believest." Under a sudden but, unhappily, also transient impulse of conviction, Agrippa said—"Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian!" To which the apostle, who with the manacles on his arms, knew that he possessed that which was worth much more than all the glory of the world, answered in the noble words: "I would to God that not only thou, but also all who hear me this day, were not only almost, but altogether, such as I am—except these bonds."

After this the court broke up; and Festus and Agrippa, on conferring together on the subject, agreed that Paul had done nothing worthy of death or of bonds, and that he might have been set at liberty if he had not appealed to the emperor, which rendered it obligatory that he should be sent to Rome.

It was by no means unusual to send from Judea to Rome persons who, under the right of Roman citizenship, had appealed to the imperial tribunal; and there seems to have been a considerable number embarked at the same time with the apostle in a ship belonging to Adramyttium. They were placed under the charge of an officer named Julius, who was centurion in "Augustus's band" or cohort. Two of Paul's friends and followers, Luke and Aristarchus, took their passage in the same ship, to share his dangers, to comfort him by their presence, and to enjoy the benefit of his society and friendship. The presence of Luke is only indicated by the use of the pronoun "we" in the description of the voyage; and in the phrase, "Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being *with us.*"

The ship in which the prisoners were embarked, voyaged along the coast; as was usual in these times, touching at different ports on its way. A day after the departure from Cæsarea the ship reached Sidon, where the centurion, who must have been apprised of the favourable opinion which was entertained by Festus of the apostle's case, courteously allowed him to land that he might "go unto his friends to refresh himself." He had often travelled this way in going to and from Jerusalem, and probably had friends in all the principal towns; and doubtless the friends at Sidon availed themselves of the opportunity of providing such supplies as might make more comfortable the voyage which lay before him, which voyage was in those days long and perilous. The original plan of the voyage, which was to go along by the coast of Asia Minor, would have taken the ship between the north of Cyprus and the southern coast of the peninsula; but contrary winds obliged them to leave the coast, and take a direct course from Sidon to the coast of Lycia, thereby passing Cyprus on the south. Having then crossed what is in our text called "the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia," they at length entered the port of Myra, which was at that time the metropolis of Lycia. To this place the ship, in which the voyage had been thus far performed, was bound; but a ship of Alexandria bound for Italy was found in the harbour, and to this the centurion removed the prisoners. From the sequel this appears to have been one of the numerous vessels employed in conveying corn from Alexandria to Italy, and which usually crossed over to Myra, and there took in supplies for the remainder and more perilous part of the voyage. Having sailed slowly for several days, they passed the gulf of Caria, and had arrived "over against the promontory of Cnidus," intending to pass to the north of Crete, when they were again driven out of their course by adverse winds, and were constrained to round the Salmone promontory, and pass to the south of the island, when they found refuge from the adverse weather in the Fair Havens near the town of Lasea. Much time having been consumed through contrary winds, the season had become far advanced; and they had still to perform a part of the voyage, which they expected to have by this time completed. This navigation was at this time of the year considered highly dangerous from tempestuous winds, and was seldom attempted by the mariners of ancient days. The danger was real, through the imperfect build of the ships, the unskilfulness of the sailors, and, above all, from the want of the compass. All parties were sensible of this, and it was agreed to winter in Crete: but although Paul, who had established his claim to respect on board the ship, advised that the vessel should remain in the Fair Havens to avoid the calamities which he foresaw, Julius deemed it most prudent to rely upon the experience of the captain and supercargo of the vessel, who urged the propriety of endeavouring to gain the safer harbour of Phenice at the western extremity of the island. In this attempt the vessel was encountered by a fierce wind which blows at this season, called Euroclydon. It blows from all points between N.E. and S.E., frequently shifting within this range, and is called by our mariners a Levanter, and by the Italians Tuffone—from the ancient name, Typhon.



1226.—Roman Soldiers.
Milwyr Rhufeinig.



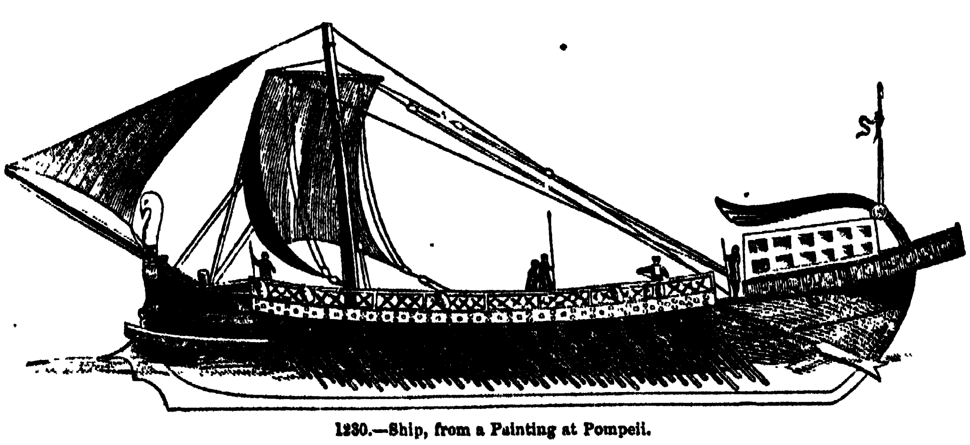
1227.—Roman Soldiers.
Milwyr Rhufeinig.



1228.—Alexandria.



1229.—Embarkation.
Mynediad i Long.



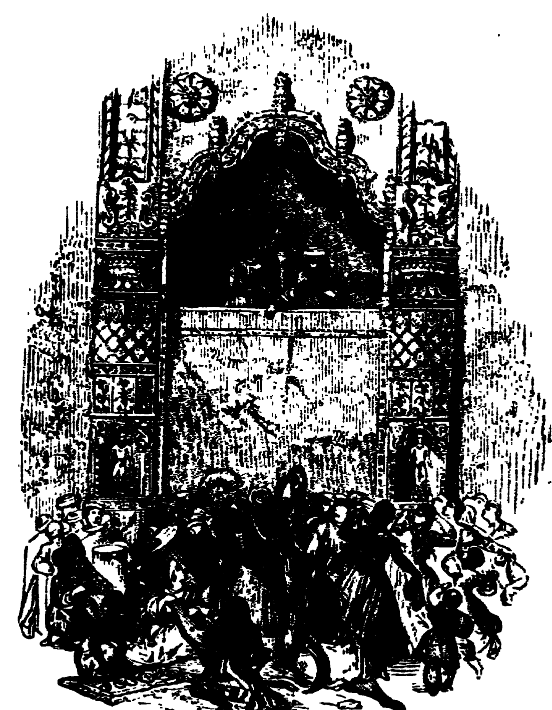
1230.—Ship, from a Painting at Pompeii.
Llong, o Baentwaith yn Pompeii.



1231.—From a Bas-relief on a Tomb at Pompeii.
O Safun ar Feddrod yn Pompeii.



1232.—Serpents.
Seirph.



1233.—Serpent-charming.
Sarph-swynwyr.



1234.—Taming Serpent.
Dofi Sarph.



1235.—Indian Serpent-charmers.
Sarph-swynwyr Indiaidd.



1236.—Indian Serpent-charmers.
Sarph-swynwyr Indiaidd.

SUNDAY L.—PROVERBS.



O acute an observer, and one so interested in the study of natural history, as Solomon, was likely to have his attention attracted by the power to which, in the East, some persons have in all ages pretended, of being able to exercise a strange power over the venomous serpents, and to handle them freely without harm. We accordingly find an allusion to this remarkable fact in his writings: "Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment, and a babbler is no better" (Eccles. x. 11). David also has a similar and even more distinct allusion to the same fact:—

> "Their poison is like the poison of serpents;
> They are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear,
> Which will not hearken to the voice of the charmer,
> Charming never so wisely." (Ps. lviii. 4, 5.)

Jeremiah also (viii. 17):—

> "Behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you,
> Which will not be charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the Lord."

These passages refer to a practice so opposed to all our notions and knowledge, as to give some interest to the explanation to which they point, and which is perhaps only needed because of our own immunity from the evils which the presence of poisonous serpents creates. They afford in fact the earliest existing references to the practice of serpent-charming. Our other ancient information is founded on the practices of the Psylli, a people of Cyrenaica, who were the most celebrated serpent-charmers of antiquity, and who are frequently mentioned by the classical writers. Their gift was supposed to be a natural power inherent to the race—a kind of gypsies apparently—to which they belonged, and not enjoyed even among them by any who were of illegitimate birth; and Pliny alleges that they in fact tested the legitimacy of their new-born children by exposing them to the most venomous serpents, which durst not molest them if they were true-born. Lucan makes the same statement, and affords many additional particulars. A body of these Psylli undertook to protect the Roman camp in Africa from serpents, by which the region was much infested. They kept marching around it chanting their "mystic songs;" but also employed the natural and probably more effective expedient of surrounding the camp by a line of fires, made of different kinds of wood, the smell of which was to keep the serpents from approaching. When any soldier abroad in the daytime happened to be bitten, the Pyslli undertook to cure him. First, to prevent, as they said, the poison from spreading while they used their arts in charming it forth, they rubbed the wounded part with saliva:—

> "Then sudden he begins the mystic song,
> And rolls the numbers hasty o'er his tongue;
> Swift he runs on, nor pauses once for breath,
> To stop the progress of approaching death:
> He fears the cure might suffer by delay,
> And life be lost but for a moment's stay.
> Thus oft, though deep within the veins it lies,
> By magic numbers chased, the mischief flies.
> But if to hear too slow—if still it stay,
> And scorn the potent charmer to obey,
> With forceful lips he fastens on the wound,
> Draws out and spits the venom to the ground."
>
> *Pharsalia*, ix. Rowe's transl.

In this account the voice is repeatedly mentioned as the instrument by which the charmers worked; and it is to "the voice of the charmer" that the Psalmist refers in the text we have cited. The charmers doubtless, as in the case mentioned by Lucan, used a form of words as a charm, or chanted a song in some peculiar measure; and to the words of the song or the charm were attributed the effects really assignable to the human voice.

Egypt and Northern Africa in the West, and India in the East, are the countries where serpent-charming in all its forms is now most generally practised. Ælian, speaking of the power possessed by the Egyptians over snakes and birds, says, "They are said to be enabled by a certain magical art to bring down birds from heaven, and to charm serpents, so as to make them come forth from their lurking-places at their command." Sir J. G. Wilkinson remarks with reference to the practice of the modern Psylli—"The Egyptian asp is a species of the cobra de capello, and is still very common in Egypt, where it is called Nashir, a word signifying 'spreading,' from its dilating its breast when angry. It is the same which the *Háwee*, or snake-players, the Psylli of modern days, use in their juggling tricks; having previously taken care to extract its fangs, or, which is a still better precaution, to burn out the poison-bag with a hot iron. They are generally about three or four feet long, but some are considerably larger, one in my possession measuring exactly six feet in length. They are easily tamed. Their food is mice, frogs, and various reptiles, and they mostly live in gardens during the warm weather, where they are of great use—the reason probably of their being chosen in ancient times as a protecting emblem. In the winter they retire to their holes, and remain in a torpid state, being incapable of bearing cold, as I had reason to observe with two I kept in the house at Cairo, which died in one night, though wrapped up in a skin and protected from the air."

The facts of serpent-charming seem to be these:—That certain species of serpents really are subject to influence from music or the sound of the human voice, while others are exempt from it, and cannot be subjected by the charmer, "charm he never so wisely." It is to these doubtless that the Psalmist and Jeremiah allude. It also appears that naturally poisonous serpents, having their poison-fangs extracted or the poison-bag destroyed, and being then tamed, are played with by the charmer, and even suffered to bite him. The process of destroying the poison-fangs is obviously alluded to by the Psalmist, where, in the verse immediately following that which we have cited, he says—"Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth." In our inquiries into this subject we have met with no instance of the wound of a really poisonous serpent being cured by serpent-charmers. In the case recorded by Lucan, it may be clearly perceived that the serpent-bites which the Psylli pretended to cure by charms, songs, and saliva, were the bites of serpents not poisonous; but when the symptoms evinced that the wound was from a poisonous serpent, they resorted to the very natural and by no means occult expedient of sucking the wound to extract the poison.

Mr. Roberts, in his *Oriental Illustrations*, speaking of the practice in India, which our cuts principally illustrate, says, "The *kuravan*, or serpent-charmer, may be found in every village, and some who have gained great fame actually live by the art. Occasionally they travel about the district to exhibit their skill. In a basket they have several serpents, which they place on the ground. The kuravan then commences playing on his instrument, and to talk to the reptiles, at which they creep out, and begin to mantle about with their heads erect and their hoods distended. After this he puts his arm to them, which they affect to bite, and sometimes leave the marks of their teeth." This writer expresses, "from close observation," the same conviction with respect to the fangs having been extracted, which Sir J. G. Wilkinson declares with respect to those used by the serpent-charmers of Egypt. He adds, "Living animals have been repeatedly offered to the man for his serpents to bite; but he would not allow it, because he knew that no harm would ensue. It is, however, granted that some of these men believe in the power of their charms, and there can be no doubt that the serpents even in their wild state are affected by the influence of music. One of these men once went to a friend of mine with his serpents and charmed them before him. After some time the gentleman said, 'I have a cobra de capello in a cage; can you charm him?' 'Oh! yes,' said the charmer. The serpent was let out of the cage, and the man began his incantations and charms: the reptile fastened upon his arm, and he was dead before the night."

In an interesting account of Egyptian serpent-charming, given by Mr. Lane in his *Modern Egyptians*, the writer states that the men for the most part profess to detect the presence of serpents in houses, and to draw them forth from their retreats. He says that the serpent-charmer assumes an air of mystery, strikes the walls with a short palm-stick, whistles, makes a clucking noise with his tongue, and spits upon the ground, and generally says:—"I adjure you by God, if ye be above, or if ye be below, that ye come forth: I adjure you by the most great name, if ye be obedient, come forth, and if ye be disobedient, die! die! die!" The serpent is generally dislodged by his stick from a fissure of the wall, or drops from the ceiling of the room. Mr. Lane adds, that he has known this to be effected under circumstances in which deception could hardly take place, and is inclined to think that the persons are acquainted with some real physical means of discovering the presence of serpents without seeing them, and of attracting them from their lurking-places.

SUNDAY L.—BIBLE HISTORY.

THIS result of a danger which had seemed to threaten the existence of the nation, filled the Jews with a degree of joy commensurate to its importance; and it was resolved to transmit the memory of it to future generations by observing the day of deliverance as a yearly festival. Mordecai confirmed this design by sending letters to all the provinces, enjoining the future observance of the fourteenth and fifteenth days of Adar, as "the days in which the Jews had obtained rest from their enemies, and the month in which their sorrow had been turned into joy: that they should make them days of feasting and rejoicing, and of sending presents one to another, and gifts to the poor." This festival, which is observed among the Jews to the present day, obtained the name of Purim, from the Persian word *Pur* or "lot," on account of the lot which Haman had cast to obtain a good day for the execution of his purpose. It is difficult to see by what authority Mordecai could appoint this festival. But he had become the foremost man of the nation, and his enactment was too much in accordance with the popular sentiment to be rejected. If, however, we may believe the Jewish writers, it did meet with some opposition from eighty-five elders, who resisted it as an innovation not sanctioned by the law. During this festival the whole book of Esther is twice read in the synagogue, once in the morning when the feast begins, and again the next morning; and whenever the name of Haman is mentioned, the very children are taught to beat on the benches and to stamp for joy. After the second reading of the law is finished, the remainder of the day is spent in sports, with music and dancing, until the time for feasting arrives, when usage sanctions, or even demands, a degree of indulgence by no means usual among this temperate people.

It is now time to return to Judea, where Ezra still remained much occupied, probably in that revision and arrangement of the Scriptures of the Old Testament which is usually ascribed to him. Little progress, however, appears to have been made with the public works calculated to give strength and dignity to Jerusalem. This is accounted for by the fact that permission to surround the town by a wall had not yet been obtained, and in those days men liked not to erect buildings of cost in places unprotected by a wall. It was not until the twentieth year of Ahasuerus that permission to fortify the town was obtained, and this was then brought about in the following manner, which, however we approve the result, shows that in the court of Persia in that age, as in the present, questions affecting the public interest were determined not on their intrinsic merits, but through the personal influence of favourite servants and ministers.

We have already seen in the case of Haman and Mordecai that a foreign extraction was no bar to advancement in the court of the Persian kings: accordingly we are not surprised to find that the high post of cup-bearer to the king was held by a Jew called Nehemiah. This office was one of great importance, not only in real dignity, but because it gave access to the king in his less formal hours, and afforded him opportunities of establishing a feeling of personal kindness towards himself on the part of the sovereign.

This Nehemiah, who was a very pious and zealous Jew, had received from a person named Hanani, who had lately arrived from Judea, such a description of the condition of the holy city as afflicted him greatly. The signs of mourning and the traces of grief were forbidden things in the Persian court, where the sunshine of the king's presence was supposed to spread happiness around; and where every countenance was expected to be radiant with cheerfulness, however the heart might be dried up by fierce passions or rent by anguish. Nehemiah, however, could not altogether obliterate from his countenance all trace of grief: the keen eye of the monarch noted this, and he was asked the cause of his sadness. At this question Nehemiah was, with reason, "greatly afraid." But he was incapable of evasion, and, thinking it best to speak out, he said,—"Let the king live for ever; why should not my countenance be sad when the city—the place of my fathers' sepulchres—lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?" The king then said, "For what dost thou make request?" Nehemiah felt the importance of this moment, and after a silent aspiration to "the God of the heavens," he was encouraged to say, "If it please the king, and if I have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me to Judea, to the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may rebuild it." The word rendered to "build" means also to fortify; and what follows shows that the real point of his request, and that which gave it the chief importance, lay in his request for permission to do that which had hitherto been always hindered or not allowed. But, in fact, the main difficulty in the king's mind lay in parting for the time required with a favourite servant, to whose presence he had been accustomed. His first question therefore was, "How long will thy journey be? and when wilt thou return?" and on receiving a satisfactory answer, the king sent him to Judea as governor of the Jews, and furnished him with letters to the Persian governors in those parts, requiring them to support his authority, and to supply whatever materials he required for all the works he was authorized to undertake—the building of the walls being specially included. This was a great event for the Jews, and gave them dignity in the eyes of the Persians, who were sensible of Nehemiah's personal favour at court, which indeed was evinced by the escort of cavalry which was given him for the journey to Jerusalem. The real Persians were therefore disposed to promote the views of the new governor to the extent of their power; but the old enemies of Israel, the Samaritans and Ammonites and Moabites, were "exceedingly vexed" when they heard that "a man had come to seek the welfare of the Israelites." Sanballat the Samaritan, and Tobiah the Ammonite, are particularly mentioned as the most active enemies of the Jews. The latter had been a slave, but was raised to the government of some one of the provinces into which Syria was divided, under the general governor.

Nehemiah did not immediately on his arrival disclose the full extent of the powers with which he was intrusted, as regarded the fortification of the city; and he seems to have desired to keep them secret till he should be in a condition to commence operations. After he had been there three days, and had recovered from the toil of travel, the governor rode around the city by night to obtain a clear notion of the labour he had undertaken. The next day he convened the priests and leading men, and said to them, "Ye see the distress that we are in, how that Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire; come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach." He adds, "Then I told them of the kind hand of my God towards me, as also the words the king had spoken to me." The evils to which they had been daily accustomed, struck them less forcibly than they did the newly arrived governor; nevertheless they were perfectly sensible of the importance of the privilege now obtained, and expressed their eagerness to commence the work.

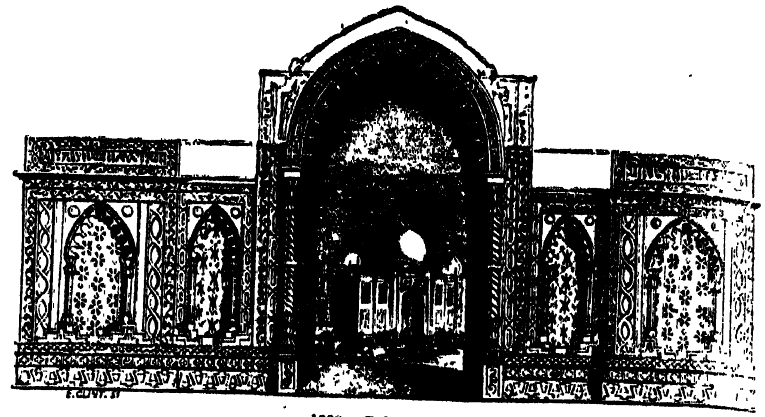
As soon as such a commencement was made as evinced the design to rebuild the walls, the attempt was treated with derision and insult by adverse parties already named. But the work proceeded with great steadiness and rapidity, every available hand being called to the service. They worked in bands under their several chiefs, each band knowing its allotted task. Work was found for every willing hand, and even goldsmiths, apothecaries, and shopkeepers ("merchants") are named among those who wrought. The gates were restored, and made strong with bolts and bars, and the wall arose with wonderful expedition from the ground. The rapidity of the work indeed was such as to suggest to the enemies of Israel an unfounded impression of its slightness, and many excellent Oriental jokes were passed by them on the subject:—"Were a jackal to go up against the stone walls they are building, he would break them down," was the remark with which Tobiah made Sanballat and his people merry.

Nehemiah felt these taunts very strongly, as evincing how his people were despised; but, nevertheless, the labour proceeded briskly, "for the heart of the people was engaged in the work."

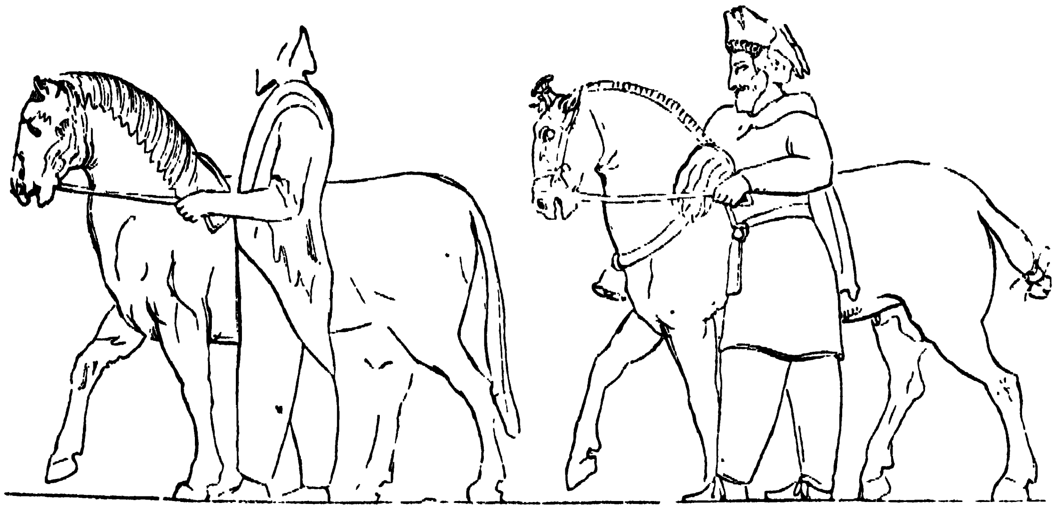
Finding this to be the case, and seeing the walls rising, the enemies of Israel became seriously alarmed, and plotted to put an end to these operations by force of arms. Information of this design transpired, and was brought to Nehemiah by Jews resident on the borders. On hearing this, the governor established a constant watch over the work, by night and day, and stationed at proper points men well armed with swords, spears, and bows; whom he encouraged, in case of being attacked, to "Remember Jehovah, and fight for your brethren, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes." By these careful preparations the enemy became aware that their plot was known; and as this, even in their view, rendered doubtful the success of what they had intended as a sudden surprise, they reluctantly abandoned their design. Nehemiah did not, however, deem it prudent to abate the vigilance which he had established. The hands which had thus



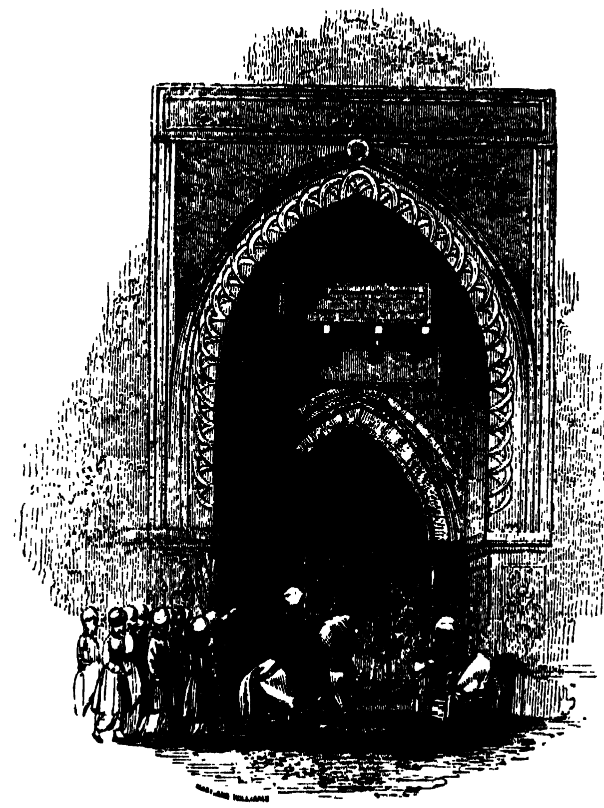
1237.—Persian Cup-bearers.
Trulliad Persiaidd.



1239.—Palace Gate.
Porth Palas.



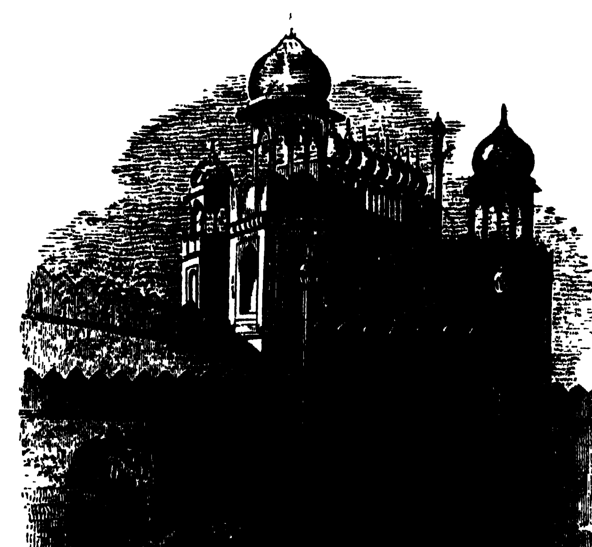
1238.—Persian Horses.
Meirch Persiaidd.



1240.—Palace Gate.
Porth Palas.



1241.—Governor on Journey.
Llywodraethwr ar Daith.



1242.—Arrival of Governor.
Dyfodiad Llywodraethwr.



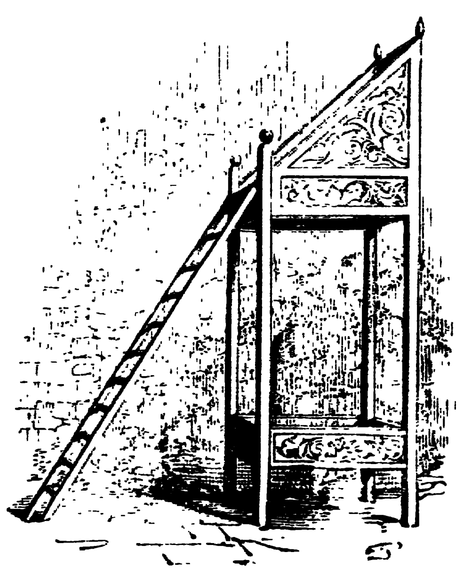
1247.—Sanballat and Tobiah. (Angelica Kauffman.)
Sanbalat a Tobiah.



1245.—Dwelling in Booths
Preswylio mewn Pebyll.



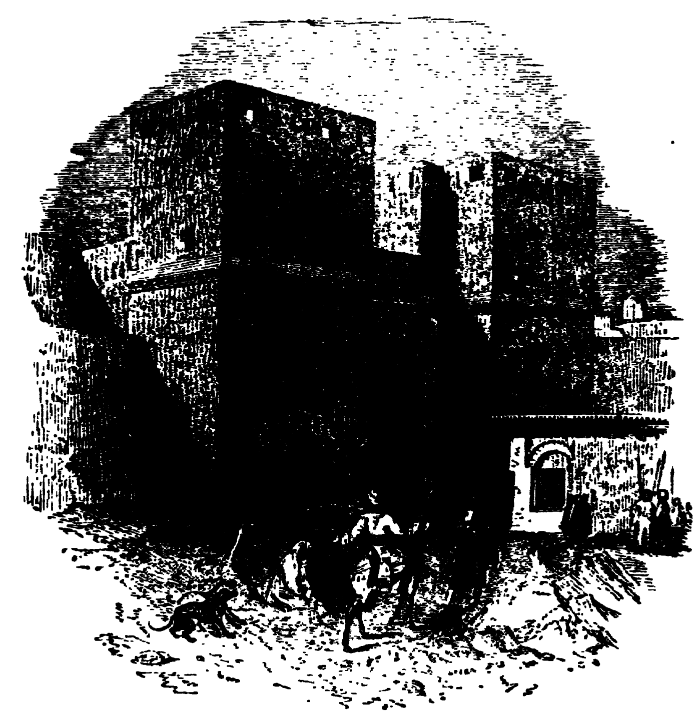
1244.—Reading the Law.
Darllenad y Gyfraith.



1248.—Modern Oriental Pulpit.
Pulpud Dwyreiniol Diweddar.



1246.—Palm-tree.
Palmwydden.



1243.—Town-Gate.
Porth Dinas.

been taken from the work were indeed restored to it; but every man who wrought on the wall, and who carried burdens, laboured with one hand, while with the other he held his weapons of war. This state of things is not unusual in the East, where men may often be seen well armed while labouring in the fields. Nehemiah did not spare his own servants, for half of them laboured in the work while the other half stood at arms. Nehemiah himself, in his anxiety to expedite the work, was constantly present, with a trumpeter to give signals in case of danger. Thus they wrought and watched "from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared;" and Nehemiah declares that during an entire month neither himself nor any of the people once put off their clothes.

After this an internal disorder, fully as grievous as the outward danger by which they had been threatened, engaged the attention of the governor. The last season had been comparatively unproductive, so that the less wealthy of the people had been obliged to mortgage their lands, houses, and vineyards, to obtain corn or to pay the Persian tribute. The extent to which the wealthier Jews had availed themselves of the necessities of their brethren to enrich themselves, will appear from the fact that several of the people complained that some of their children had already been brought into bond-service; "nor is it in our power to redeem them," said they, "for other men have our lands and vineyards."

When all these things were reported to Nehemiah, he became very angry, and convened a public assembly, in which he exposed and denounced the evil of this proceeding, and drew from the parties a solemn promise to restore all that they had in this way obtained. Then, says Nehemiah, "I shook my lap and said, So may God shake out every man from his house and from his labour, that performeth not this promise: even thus may he be shaken out and emptied." It is gratifying to learn that the promise thus obtained was kept very strictly.

Nehemiah was enabled to act with the more confidence in this matter, as, although he was entitled to a large allowance for the expenses of his large establishment as governor, he forbore to require anything from the people, and, with unexampled liberality, not only gave his care and solicitude without pay or reward, but bore all the charges of his expensive office entirely out of his private fortune. Nor did this consideration make him sparing in his expenditure, for his hospitable and generous temper carried him far beyond the obligations of his office. Above one hundred and fifty Jews, not belonging to his establishment, were entertained at his table, the daily supply of which required one ox and six sheep, besides fowl, and once every ten days a large supply of wine. As the Orientals are but sparing consumers of animal food, this consumption implies a larger expenditure on other commodities than would be understood in northern climates. Those who are acquainted with the exactions and oppressions exercised by the officers and attendants of Persian governors even at the present day, will best understand the intimation given by Nehemiah, who, speaking of former governors, says, "Even their servants bare rule over the people; but I did not thus, because I feared God in my heart."

The enemies of Israel—Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian—seeing that the wall was now finished, and all strong and complete, save only the gates, saw that the time for any acts of direct violence had passed. They therefore sought to ensnare the governor, to whose influence and energy they justly attributed the prosperous aspect which the affairs of the Jewish people were beginning to assume. Being themselves invested with petty governments under the Persians, they invited Nehemiah to a conference, as if on matters of common interest, at Chepirim, in the plain of Ono. Suspicious of their intentions, he returned the discreet answer, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down; why should the work cease whilst I leave it and come down to you?" They, however, repeated the invitation not less than four times, and, always receiving the same answer, Sanballat at length sent a servant to him bearing an open letter in his hand. In this letter it was stated to be commonly reported that it was his intention to revolt against the Persians, whose interests they were bound to watch. Nehemiah contented himself with a strong denial of so improbable a charge, and hastened the completion of the gates, knowing that his best security, under God, from all these machinations, lay in securing the defences of the city. The accusers had, however, some influential partisans even in the town, who believed, or affected to believe, that the strength of the fortifications might give the Persians reason to credit the accusation; and who supposed that the fact of the probable grounds for such a suspicion would justify the adversaries to the Persian government, under the cover of over-zeal for the Persian interests, in any acts of violence to which they might resort. These urged Nehemiah to shut himself in the temple—on the ground that an assault, which they alleged to be in contemplation, was directed entirely against his own person; but he knew that this act of shutting himself up in what was then in fact the citadel of Jerusalem, would give colour to the worst devices of the enemy; and with becoming spirit he answered, "Should such a man as I flee? And who like me would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in."

Beset by spies, who carried his words to his enemies, and annoyed by offensive letters which were repeatedly sent to him, Nehemiah yet persevered steadily in his great task, and at length, on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul, only fifty-two days from the commencement—so earnestly had the work been carried on—he had the satisfaction of seeing it completed, B.C. 445.

The walls being thus finished, and the gates complete, Nehemiah was enabled to establish greater order in the city than had before been possible: keepers were stationed at every one of the gates, and over the whole was Hananiah, "a faithful man, who feared God above many," who had it in charge to see the gates closed in the evening, and properly secured with bolts and bars, and also not to open them in the morning until "the sun was hot." Such regulations are still usual in the walled towns of the East, and in this case were peculiarly necessary, as the town, although large, was but thinly peopled, the houses which it contained being still very few, while the apprehension of danger from the enemies of Israel had not yet passed away.

After the term of his civil commission had ceased, it appears that Ezra remained at Jerusalem, and is supposed, as already intimated, to have devoted much of his time in collecting and arranging the Sacred Books which now form the canon of the Old Testament. He was now called forward to read to the people the law of Moses, of which it seems to have been known that he had now provided a perfect copy. It seems also to have been the season in which it was directed that the law should be publicly read to the people, being every seventh year at the feast of tabernacles. This regulation had been much neglected, but now the people present at Jerusalem for the feast "assembled as one man in the street before the water-gate," and required Ezra to bring forth and read the book of the law. The worthy man gladly responded to this call, and he read the law in the street to all "who could hear with understanding, from morning till night." He stood upon a pulpit or platform of wood, which had been made for the purpose, so that the people might both see and hear him. The brief notices of this great solemnity are suggestive and interesting:—Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, and when he opened it all the people stood up, and Ezra blessed Jehovah, the great God. And all the people with uplifted hands answered Amen, Amen; and they bowed their heads and worshipped Jehovah with their faces to the ground." There was one serious difficulty, which had, perhaps, hitherto prevented, since the return from exile, the law from being thus publicly read. The mass of the people, born in a foreign country, or the children of parents to whom the language of that country had become a mother-tongue, no longer understood the language in which the Sacred Books were written. The Chaldee was indeed but another dialect than Hebrew of the same great Aramæan branch of languages; but the difference was sufficient to prevent the one from being generally intelligible to those who were only acquainted with the other. To meet this difficulty several priests and Levites were conveniently stationed to repeat to the people in the Chaldee language that which Ezra read to them in the Hebrew. The people, few of whom had been previously acquainted with more than the traditions of the law, were deeply concerned at much which they now heard, and wept and mourned greatly. But they were reminded that the day was a festival—a day of joy, and not of grief, and Nehemiah dismissed them for the day with the words: "Go your way, eat the fat and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is provided; for this day is holy to our Lord." The people followed this counsel, and "rejoiced exceedingly—because they understood the things that were declared to them."

The readings of the law, after the same manner, were continued throughout the week. The extent of the ignorance of their own institutions into which the people had fallen, is shown by the fact that they knew not until the second day, when Ezra arrived at that portion of the law which enjoins the observance, that they were to abide in huts or booths of green boughs during the very feast which they were then celebrating. On hearing this, they applied themselves with great alacrity to remedy the oversight. They set forth to gather olive branches, pine branches, palm branches, myrtle branches, and branches of all thick trees, to make such verdant booths as the law required.

SUNDAY L.—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

GOING from the Fair Havens, the ship was caught by this wind and driven "under" far south of the small island of Clauda (now Gaudos), which is twenty-five miles south of the port of Phenice, which they had hoped to reach.

At this point they had much difficulty in securing the boat attached to the vessel from being dashed to pieces. Every ship had a boat, but in those times it was not taken up and secured on deck, as with us, but was towed at the stern of the vessel. The reason for this difference is clear. Our mariners on leaving port bid adieu to the land; whereas the ancient mariners in creeping along the coast maintained much intercourse with the shore, for which the boat was always kept ready. When, however, a storm arose, the boat was secured by being drawn up close under the stern, which doubtless was the mode in which the boat was in the present case secured.

Having taken this precaution, the voyagers became apprehensive lest the ship should be driven upon the dreaded quicksands of the African coast, and there go to pieces: and they therefore "used helps, undergirding the ship," which seems to mean that they drew strong cables around the hull to keep its timbers together or break the shock of a concussion. Instances of such a practice occur even in modern voyages; and that it was resorted to anciently appears from the following lines of Horace:—

> "The wounded mast
> And sail-yards groan beneath the southern blast;
> Nor without ropes the keel can longer brave
> The rushing fury of th' imperious wave."—*Carm* i. 14.

Further to avoid the danger of being driven on the dreaded quicksands, they struck sail, and, as our sailors would say, "scudded under bare poles." This striking of the sail was in ancient ships effected not by reefing the sails to the yards, but by lowering both the yards and sails together to the deck. This is shown by Fig. 1273; and might be illustrated by extracts from ancient writers. This explanation relieves some of the obscurity which involves the nautical details of this portion of our history. On the third day from the commencement of the storm, it was found necessary to lighten the ship by throwing overboard all the tackling which was not indispensable to its preservation. After this the mariners entirely lost their reckoning, and knew not whither they were going; for, in the absence of a compass, the ancient seamen, when out of sight of land, relied upon the sun by day and the stars by night; but now neither the sun nor stars had been visible for many days. Under these discouragements the spirits of both the crew and passengers gave way, and all hope that they should be saved was abandoned. At this juncture Paul stood forth, and after reminding them that this danger would not have been incurred had his advice been taken, he exhorted them to be of good cheer, for that, although the ship itself must be lost, all their lives would be saved. As his authority for this, he alleged that in the night he had been visited by an angel "of the God whose I am and whom I serve;" who said to him, "Fear not, Paul: thou must be brought before Cæsar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." The apostle added, "Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God, that it shall be even as he hath told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island." As men in desperate circumstances readily grasp even the shadow of a hope, there is no doubt that Paul's intimation was received with more gladness and confidence than any intimation from him might in more prosperous days have commanded.

On the fourteenth night from the commencement of the storm the mariners deemed by the soundings that they were approaching the land, and fearing to be dashed to pieces on the rocks, they stayed the ship by casting four anchors out at the stern, and remained longing for daylight to disclose the position in which they lay. The seamen having let down the boat under colour of getting the anchors out at the foreship also, manifested an intention to escape in it from the ship: but Paul declared to the centurion and the soldiers, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved;" on which such was the influence he had acquired, they cut the rope and let the boat go adrift.

While they remained waiting for the day, the apostle repeated his assurance that not a hair of any one of their heads should fall to the ground, and in that assurance he urged them to take some refreshment after the long abstinence which their distress had occasioned, and he cheerily set them the example by eating some bread in their presence. On this, "they were all of good cheer, and also took some meat." Being thus strengthened, they applied themselves to the task of still further lightening the ship, by throwing overboard the corn with which it was laden.

At length the wished-for dawn appeared; they found themselves near a shore which none of them could recognise. Opposite them was a creek which seemed to offer a practicable harbour and safe anchorage, and into this they concluded to carry the ship. They therefore again took up their anchors and hoisted their sails. But falling into a place "where two seas met" at the entrance of the creek, the ship went aground, so that the fore part stuck fast among the rocks, while the hinder part was broken by the violence of the waves. The soldiers who had charge of the prisoners on board then proposed that they should all be killed, lest they should swim ashore and escape. This shocking proposal was, however, overruled by the centurion, chiefly, as it appears, out of regard for Paul, who would have been involved in the massacre; and a general order was given that all who could swim should cast themselves into the sea and endeavour to reach the land. This they did; and then those who could not swim managed to reach the shore by the help of boards and broken pieces of the wreck, so that every soul on board, to the number of two hundred and seventy-six, reached the shore in safety, without the loss of a single life, or any serious injury sustained.

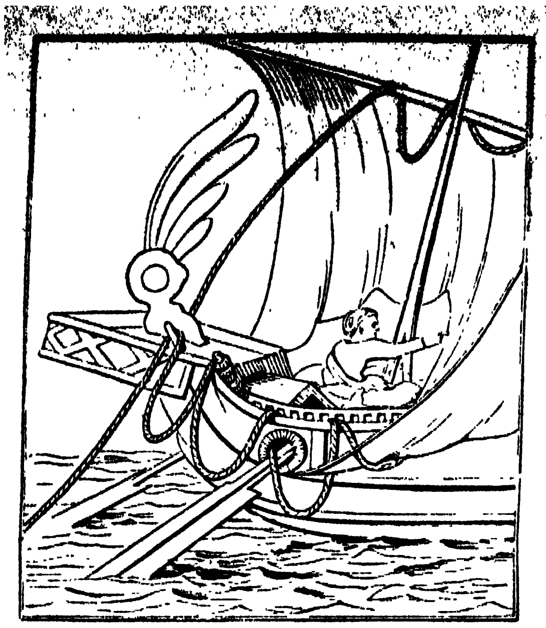
Having reached the shore, it was soon ascertained that they were upon an island called Melita, which is generally supposed to have been the present Malta. Here "the barbarous people," says the historian, "showed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold."

The apostle, with his usual cheerful alacrity in every useful labour, employed himself in collecting sticks for this fire. Concealed in the bundle which he collected was a poisonous serpent, in a torpid state. But when the wood was cast upon the fire, the viper became warmed by the heat, and darted forth, and fastened upon Paul's hand. When the natives of the island beheld this, and concluded that he must needs die, they said among themselves, "No doubt this man is a murderer, whom though he hath escaped the vengeance of the sea, yet vengeance (*Diké*, or justice) suffereth not to live."

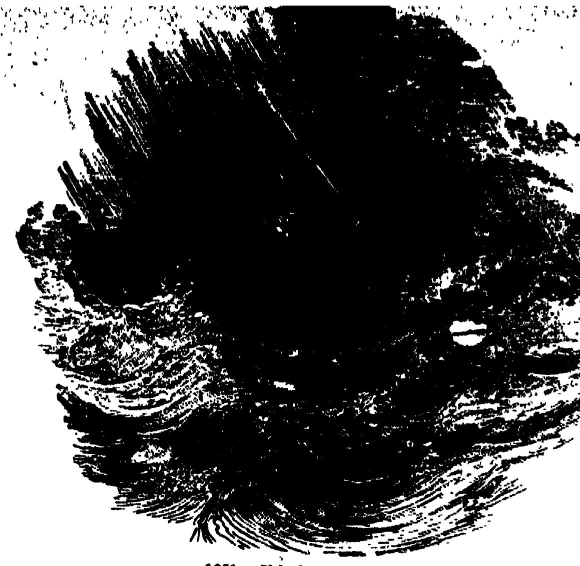
In reaching this conclusion the people reasoned in strict accordance with the prevalent notions of the age, which indeed are not yet wholly extinct. It was believed that great criminals were often preserved by divine justice from one kind of death to perish by another more painful and horrible. It was also a general impression that the offending member in most cases received the punishment: and the people of the island doubtless felt that in the case before their eyes, the viper had fastened upon the very hand which had taken the life of a fellow-being. It was also generally believed, by both heathen and Jews, that no murderer, however he might evade human justice, ever finally escaped the righteous judgments of heaven. Serpents were to a certain extent regarded as the appropriate instrument of such punishments. The Jewish writers themselves give the story of a man who slew his friend, but was immediately after bitten by a serpent and died. They also allege that when the power of inflicting death was taken from the nation by the Romans, all the guilty did not escape: if a man deserved to be burnt, he fell into the fire, or a serpent bit him; or if he deserved to be strangled, he fell into a river, or was taken off by the quinsey. These remarks will go to illustrate the class of impressions under which the kind people of Melita conceived that the hand on which the viper fastened was stained with blood.

But the apostle quietly cast off into the fire the snake which they knew to be venomous; and they stood watching the effects of the poison which they believed to have entered his frame. But he remained cheerful and unharmed: and then the people changed their minds, and believed that he whom they had just regarded as a murderer could not be less than a god.

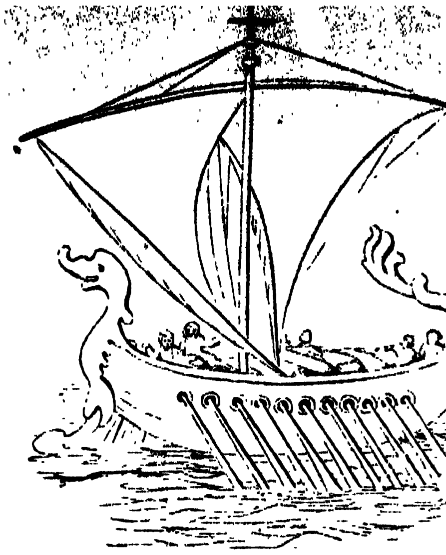
The shipwrecked men received a most kind and courteous entertainment from Publius, the Roman governor of the island, who, numerous as they were, provided them with lodging and provisions during their stay. The report of the centurion concerning Paul, and the wonder so lately wrought as regarded the serpent, introduced the apostolical party to the especial and favourable notice of this personage. This was amply repaid by Paul through the powers more precious than wealth which were vested in him.



1249.—From a Painting on the Walls of Pompeii.
O Baentwaith ar Furiau Pompeii.



1251.—Ship in a Storm.
Llong mewn Tymmestl.



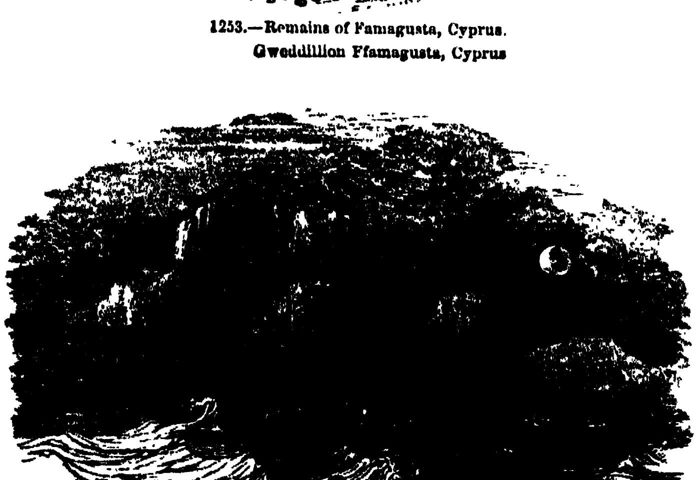
1250.—Galley. (From Pompeii.)
Rhwyf-long. (O Pompeii.)



1252. -Malta.



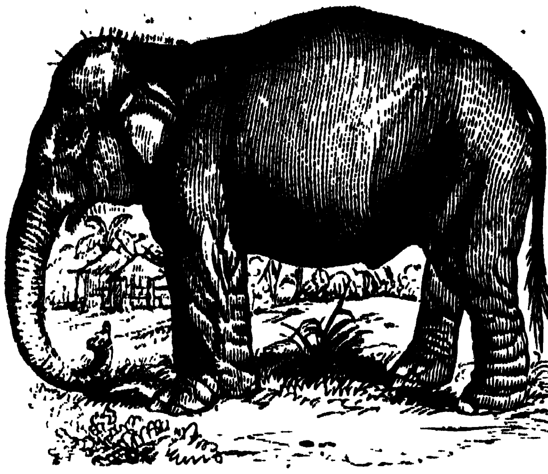
1253.—Remains of Famagusta, Cyprus.
Gweddillion Ffamagusta, Cyprus



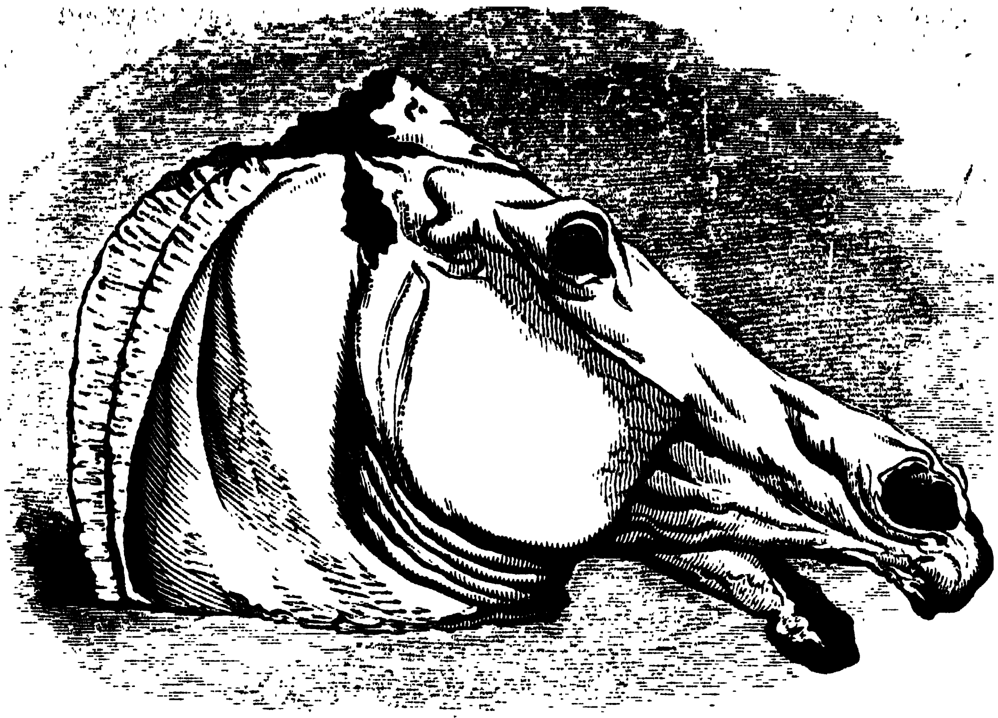
1254.—Storm at Sea.
Tymmestl ar y Môr.



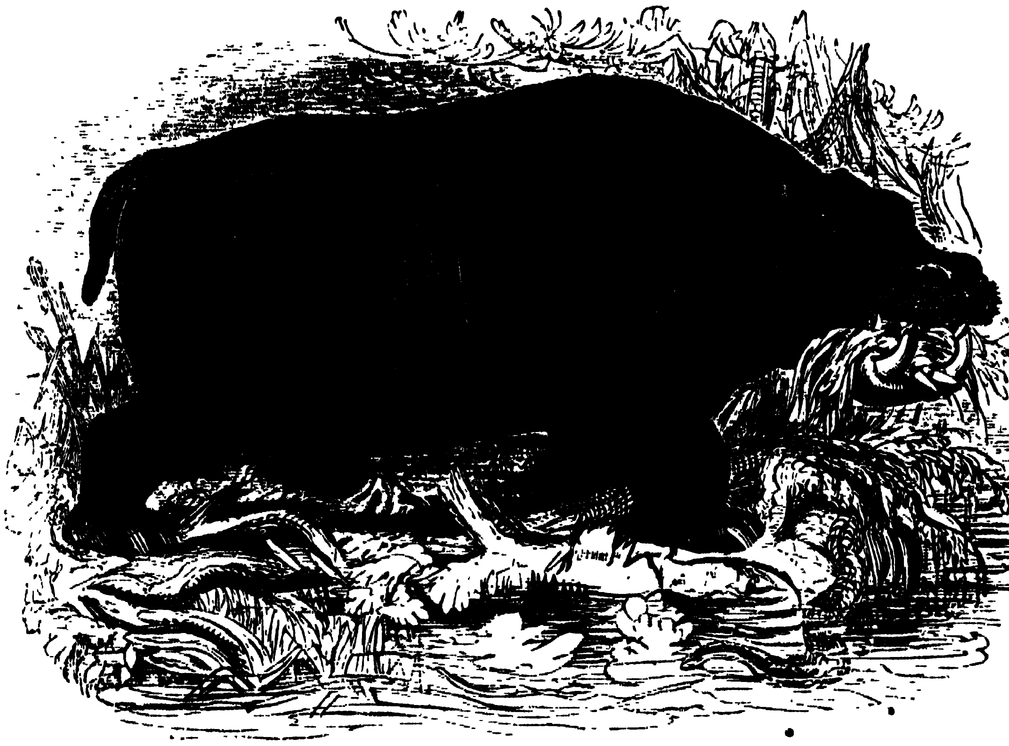
1255.—Paul shaking the Viper from his Hand. (B. West.)
Paul yn ysgwyd y Wiber oddi wrth ei Law.



1256.—Indian Elephant
Elephant Indiaidd.



1259.—Horse's Head (From the Elgin Marbles.)
Pen March. (Oddi ar Feini Mynor Elgin.)



1258.—Hippopotamus.
Afonfarch.



1260.—Eastern War-Horse.
March Rhyfel Dwyreiniol.



1257.—Asiatic Elephant.
Elephant Asiaidd.



1261.—Eastern War-Horse.
March Rhyfel Dwyreiniol.

SUNDAY LI.—JOB.

PICTURESQUE and very forcible descriptions of the Reem (translated "Unicorn"), of the ostrich (accompanied by an allusion to the stork), of the horse, and of the eagle, occupy the remainder of this most striking chapter (the thirty-ninth). Of these magnificent pictures—for such they are—that of the horse has been particularly admired. We give it to the reader in Noyes's excellent translation:—

"Hast thou given the horse strength?
Hast thou clothed his neck with his quivering mane?
Hast thou taught him to bound like the locust?
How majestic his snorting! how terrible!
He paweth in the valley, he exulteth in his strength,
And rusheth into the midst of arms.
He laugheth at fear; he trembleth not,
And turneth not back from the sword.
Against him rattleth the quiver,
The flaming spear and the lance.
With rage and fury he devoureth the ground;
He standeth not still when the trumpet soundeth.
He saith among the trumpets Aha! Aha!
And snuffeth the battle afar off,
The thunder of the captains, and the war-shout."

This is agreed on all hands to be the finest description of the war-horse on record. The nearest to it is that of Virgil, which is much admired by classical scholars. We may here cite this description in Sotheby's translation. It indeed loses much of its force in translation, but that of Job loses still more by the same process:—

"But at the clash of arms, his ear afar
Drinks the deep sound and vibrates to the war;
Flames from each nostril roll in gathered stream;
His quivering limbs with restless motion gleam;
O'er his right shoulder, flowing full and fair,
Sweeps his thick mane and spreads his pomp of hair;
Swift works his double spine, and earth around
Rings to the solid hoof that wears the ground."

At the end of the thirty-ninth chapter the Almighty is represented as pausing, and demanding of Job an answer to his questions, and inviting him to defend his cause. But the past admonitions had produced their due effect upon the mind of the patriarch. He became duly impressed with the utmost reverence for the greatness and majesty of God; and lost the boldness and presumption with which he once challenged the Almighty to a controversy. He humbly answers:—

"Behold, I am vile! what can I answer thee?
I will lay my hand upon my mouth.
Once have I spoken, but I will not speak again;
Yea, twice, but I will say no more."

But to make his submission more complete and impressive, the Almighty is represented as addressing him in a still severer tone of reprehension; and, in reference to his desire of entering into a controversy with the Divine Being, he is challenged to emulate a single exertion of the Divine power. He adds descriptions of the Behemoth and Leviathan, by which his power is strikingly exhibited. The following is the description of the former:—

"Behold the Behemoth, which I have made as well as thyself;
He feedeth on grass like the ox.
Behold what strength is in his loins!
And what vigour in the muscles of his belly!
He bendeth his tail like the cedar,
And the sinews of his thighs are twisted together.
His bones are pipes of brass,
And his limbs are bars of iron.
He is chief among the works of God;
He that made him gave him his sword.
For the mountains supply him with food,
Where all the beasts of the field play.
He reposeth under the lote-trees,
In the coverts of the reeds and in the fens.
The lote-trees cover him with their shadow,
And the willows of the brook compass him about.
The stream overfloweth him, but he fleeth not;
He is unmoved though a Jordan rush forth even to his mouth.
Can one take him before his eyes,
Or pierce his nose with a ring?" (xxxix. 14—24.)

The reader is doubtless aware that it has been much questioned what animal is intended by this description. The point of the discussion has chiefly turned upon the respective claims of the elephant and the hippopotamus or river-horse; but the balance of opinion seems to be in favour of the latter. This view is enforced and largely illustrated in the 'Pictorial Bible,' and may here be stated in the words of Herder, in his 'Spirit of Hebrew Poetry:'—"In general the description is undoubtedly that of an animal whose usual resort is the river, since it is introduced as something singular that he eateth grass like an ox, that the mountains bring him forth food, and the beasts of the field play around him. He sleeps among the reeds, and lies concealed among the marshes on the shores of the river, which clearly does not suit the description of the elephant (with which the Behemoth has been sometimes identified). He goes against the stream, as if he would drink up the river with his enormous mouth—a character not well fitting a land animal. His strength is in his loins, and his force is in the navel of his belly, where, on the contrary, the elephant is weakest. He that made him furnished him with a sword; for the sharp-pointed and projecting tusks of the hippopotamus may be considered his weapons; and the language applies better to these than to the weapons of the elephant. Since moreover the name Behemoth itself is probably the Egyptian name of this animal, *p-ehe-mouth* (river ox), here modified, as all other words were, by the Hebrews and Greeks, to suit their own forms, and since, in company with the crocodile, it is placed apart from the land animals, which also are arranged in a separate discourse by themselves, and represented, as all creatures of the watery realm are by the Orientals, as something foreign and monstrous, it seems that this opinion has at least the balance of probabilities in its favour, and will soon become the prevailing one."

Although this description has upon the whole more points which can be recognised in the rhinoceros than in the elephant, it must be admitted that there are a few traits which would agree more with the elephant than with the hippopotamus, and others which would agree equally with both. And under this view of the case, a distinguished naturalist (Colonel C. Hamilton Smith), writing in Mr. Kitto's 'Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature' (art. BEHEMOTH), prefers to understand that the word, instead of being restricted to the hippopotamus, is to be regarded as a poetical personification of the great Pachydermata, or even Herbivora, wherein the idea of hippopotamus is predominant. "This view," he says, "accounts for the ascription to it of characters not truly applicable to one species. The tail is likened to a cedar, which is one admissible only in the case of the elephant: again, 'the mountains bring him forth food;' 'he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan,' a river which elephants alone could reach [but this has been differently explained above]; 'his nose pierceth through snares;' certainly more indicative of that animal's proboscis, with its extraordinary delicacy of scent and touch, ever cautiously applied, than the obtuse perceptions of the river-horse. Finally, the elephant is more dangerous as an enemy than the hippopotamus, which numerous pictorial sculptures on the monuments of Egypt represent as fearlessly speared by a single hunter standing upon his float of log and reeds. Yet, although the elephant is scarcely less fond of water, the description referring to manners, such as lying under the shade of willows, among reeds, in fens, &c., is more directly characteristic of the hippopotamus." We entirely subscribe to the further remark of this writer;—"The book of Job is full of knowledge, although that knowledge is not expressed according to the precise technicalities of modern science; it offers pictures in magnificent outline, without condescending to minute and laboured details. Considered in this light, the expression of Psalm l. 10,—'For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle [Behemoth] upon a thousand hills,' acquires a grandeur and force far surpassing the mere idea of cattle of various kinds."

SUNDAY LI.—BIBLE HISTORY.

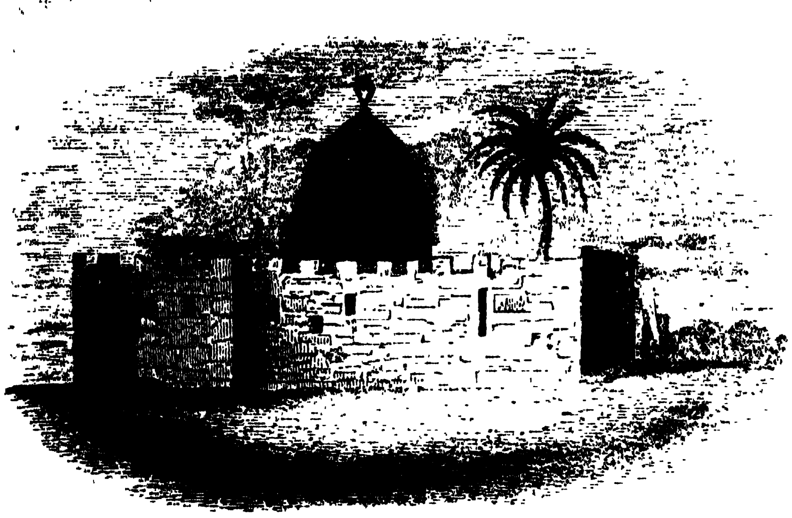
THESE booths were made by the residents upon the roofs and in the courts of their houses, while the non-residents made theirs in the streets and open places, and even in the courts of the temple. The historian assures us that the feast had not been thus kept since the days of Joshua: but since then, even to the present day, the festival has been carefully observed by all the Jewish people. The salutary effect produced by the reading of the law on this occasion induced the leading men to take care that henceforth they should constantly enjoy this advantage. It was ordered that suitable places of assembly should be built in every town, where the people might meet on the Sabbath days to offer up their prayers, and hear certain portions of the Sacred Book read and explained to them. This was the origin of synagogues, and, indirectly, of Christian assemblies for prayer and teaching on the Lord's day. The salutary effect of this measure is seen in the fact that the Israelites, as a people, remained ever after untainted by the idolatrous tendencies into which they had in former times been so easily seduced.

After the festive week was ended, the people were at liberty to express by fasting and other acts of mourning the humiliation which had previously been repressed. They appeared in sackcloth, with earth upon their heads, and stood and confessed their own sins and the iniquities of their fathers. While the people thus stood humbly before God, certain Levites, standing upon the platform, gave a voice to the general feeling in the eloquent prayer which is contained in the ninth chapter of Nehemiah. It contains a recapitulation of the ancient mercies of God towards his chosen people, of their obduracy and repeated rebellions against him, and of the miseries which had in consequence been inflicted upon them: and it concludes with a touching allusion to their own subject condition in the very land which their fathers had once possessed in glory and independence. "Behold, we are servants this day; and for the land which thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof, and the good thereof, behold we are servants in it: and it yieldeth much increase to the kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins: also they have dominion over our bodies and over our cattle, and we are in great distress."

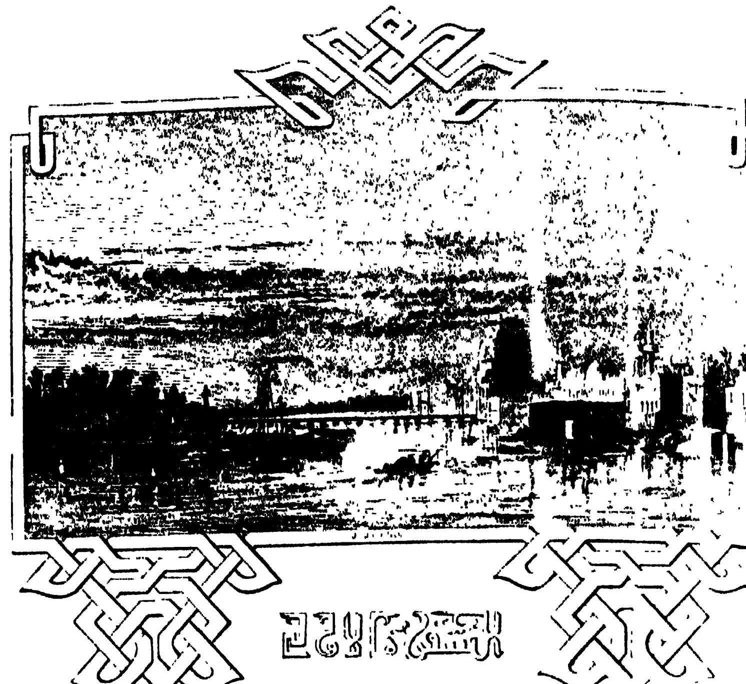
Under the influence of these feelings and convictions, the people then present solemnly renewed their ancient national covenant with God. This covenant appears to have been written down, and the nobles, priests, Levites, and "the chief of the people" set their seals to it. The names of those who affixed their seals to the covenant are given in Neh. x.; that of Nehemiah himself is at the head, but that of Ezra does not appear among them, for which it is difficult to account, considering the prominent part which he had taken in the transactions which led to this result. Indeed there is no further mention of him in the history. Josephus says that he died and was buried at Jerusalem; but this is contrary to the general opinion of the Jews, whose writers allege that he died at Zamzuma, a town on the Tigris, on his way from Jerusalem to Susa to seek an interview with the king concerning the affairs of the Jews. In accordance with this tradition is the fact that a tomb—fully believed by the Jews, Christians, and Moslems of the country to be that of Ezra—exists, and is maintained as a place of pilgrimage upon the west branch of the Tigris, about twenty miles above the junction of that river with the Euphrates. Of this structure a figure is given in Fig. 1262. A very particular account of it is furnished by the editor of the *Pictorial Bible* (Note on Ezra x.), who visited the spot in 1832. From this we collect that the alleged tomb of Ezra (locally *Ozair*) is the most important structure (ruins excepted) in the whole distance down the river from Bagdad to the Euphrates. It is a mosque-like building, enclosed within a high wall, and standing so close to the river that the wall almost juts into the stream. The elegant and highly enriched dome, rising high from the centre of the enclosure, with the palm-tree in the court, gives to the whole a very striking and picturesque appearance in the flat and now desolate region in which it is situated. The exterior wall is on the inside surrounded by ranges of arched apartments, like those of the caravanserai, and the mausoleum, which rises in the centre of the court, indicates, by the castellated walls and the shape of the cupola, the modern Saracenic order of architecture. In fact, an inscription over the entrance shows that it was rebuilt in its present state in A.D. 1737, by Ahmed, pasha of Bagdad. There are traces of ancient foundations which seem to show that the previous structure was more extensive than the present. The interior consists of two arched apartments, the innermost of which contains the tomb, directly under the centre of the dome. This is covered by a kind of ark of dark wood, with a slanting roof-like cover, with large cones at the apex and corners of the roof. The whole is about six feet high, by eight long and four broad, and is hung by a faded pall of green velvet fringed with gold. This pall is much worn by the kisses of the pilgrims, and its fringe reduced by the threads being pilfered to preserve as relics. Around the upper rim of the sarcophagus, below the cover or roof, was a Hebrew inscription in wooden letters, fastened on with brass nails, giving the genealogy of Ezra. At one end of the inner cell, which contains the tomb, is a niche, in which a lamp is kept constantly burning, and two candles are also lit when any pilgrims arrive, although the light of day is admitted into the place through elliptical openings at the base of the cupola. The writer whom we have followed adds:—"Several Jews, Mohammedans, and native Christians were present at our visit, which gave us an opportunity of observing their proceedings at the tomb. They walked slowly and solemnly around the sarcophagus barefoot, pausing at intervals to pray and kiss the pall. The Jews were provided with manuscript books in Hebrew, from which they read their prayers or psalms with great fervour. Some women of the party were distinguished by their zeal; they kissed the venerated tomb more abundantly and earnestly than the men; and, not content with this, dipped their fingers into the lamp to anoint themselves with the oil. The veneration of the Jews for this spot, which is now far distant from any town, in a region that once teemed with a settled population, leads them to incur great danger and hardship to visit it. This is one of the many instances in which the Jews continue to manifest that strong veneration for the real or supposed tombs of their prophets, to which there are some allusions in the New Testament."

We have already had occasion to intimate that Ezra is generally believed to have rendered to the church the important and heaven-directed service of collecting, arranging, and revising the books which now compose the Old Testament Scriptures. So important do the Jews hold his labours in this great task, that for this, in connection with his other labours, they regard him as almost a second Moses; for, say they, "As the law was given by Moses, so it was revived by him, or under his superintendence, after it had been in a manner extinguished and lost during the captivity." Dean Prideaux and other writers have largely explained the labours which had probably become necessary, and which Ezra is supposed to have performed. According to this account we are to understand that he corrected all the errors which had crept into previous copies through the negligence or mistakes of transcribers; that he collected together all the books of which the Holy Scriptures consisted, and disposed them in proper order, settling the canon of Scripture for his time; that he added in several places, what, under Divine direction, he considered necessary for the illustrating, correcting, and completing them; that he changed the old names of several places which had become obsolete, for those by which they were known in his time; that he wrote the whole out in the Chaldean character, which had come into exclusive use during the captivity. The old Hebrew character was however retained by the Samaritans in their copies of the law, and through them has been preserved to the present day. That Ezra also added the vowel points to the words of the sacred text, was at one time an opinion very generally entertained, but is one which has now few advocates; these appendages, by which the sense of every word is indicated, and its pronunciation defined, being usually ascribed to a much later period.

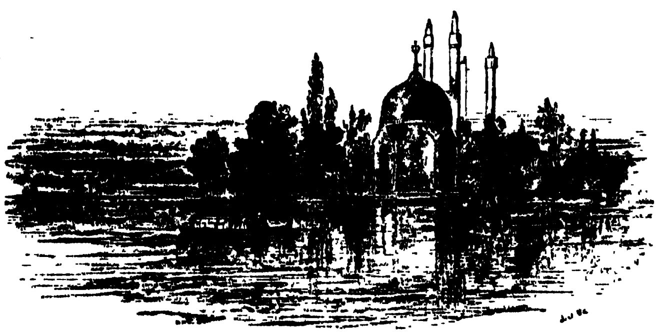
In calling Ezra a second Moses, the Jews do not exaggerate his position, or rate too highly the importance of the duties which he undertook or which devolved upon him. This may be even said apart from his alleged labours on the canon of Scripture. His public mission was no less than to replace the Jews in their social and ecclesiastical position, under the laws of Moses and the institutions of David. That he performed this task well there is no reason to question, although the record of his proceedings scarcely does more than report his measures for separating the chosen people from the illegal alliances which they had contracted with strangers. In active services we find him less conspicuous than his successor Nehemiah; but we may very safely regard him as the legist of the restoration. All that pertained to the order of worship, the rites and festivals, the classification of families, the levy of imposts, the franchises of the tribe of Levi, and the administration of justice—



1262.—Tomb of Ezra.
Beddrod Ezra.



1263. Bagdad.



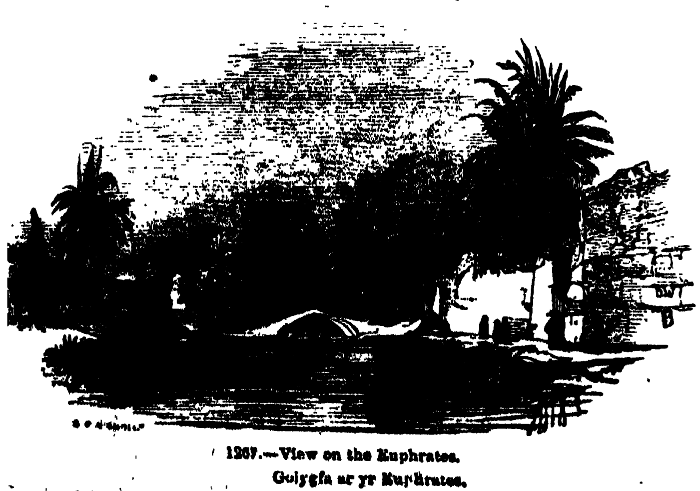
1264.—Mosque on the Tigris.
Teml Dyrcaidd ar y Tigris.



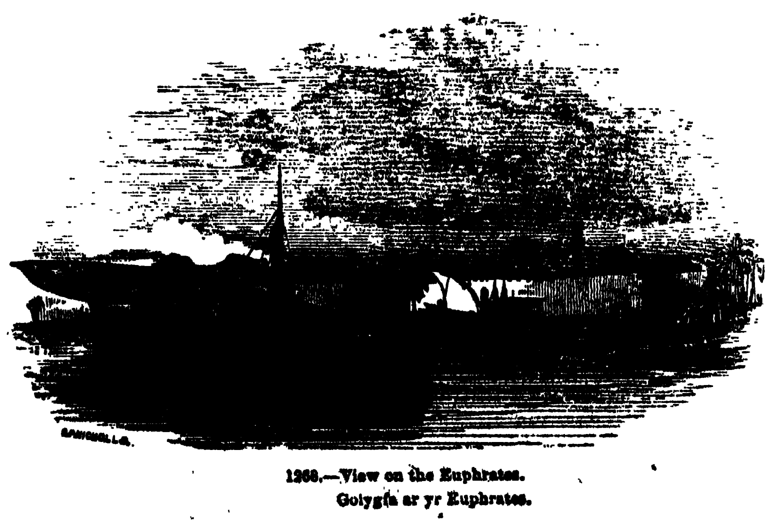
1265.—Male, Female, and Young of Wild Goat of Syria.
Gwryw, Benyw, a Myn Gafr Wyllt Syria.



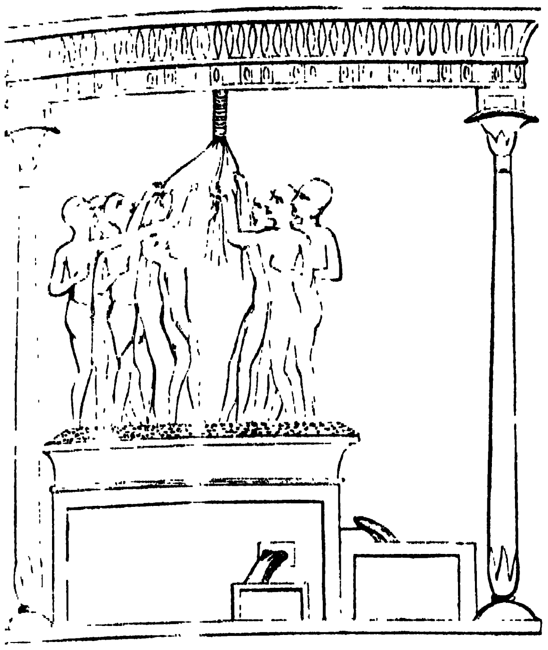
1266.—Palm-trees.
Palmwydd.



1267.—View on the Euphrates.
Golygfa ar yr Euphrates.



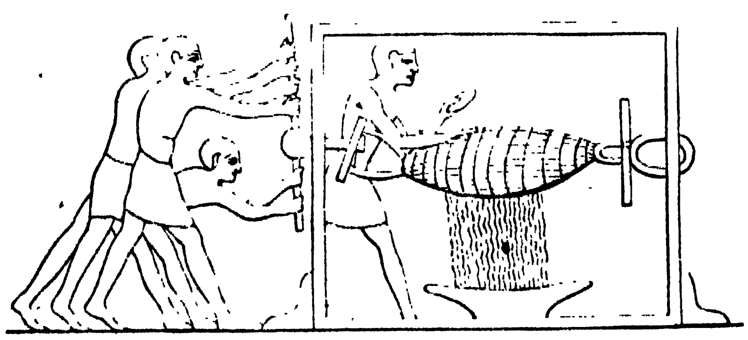
1268.—View on the Euphrates.
Golygfa ar yr Euphrates.



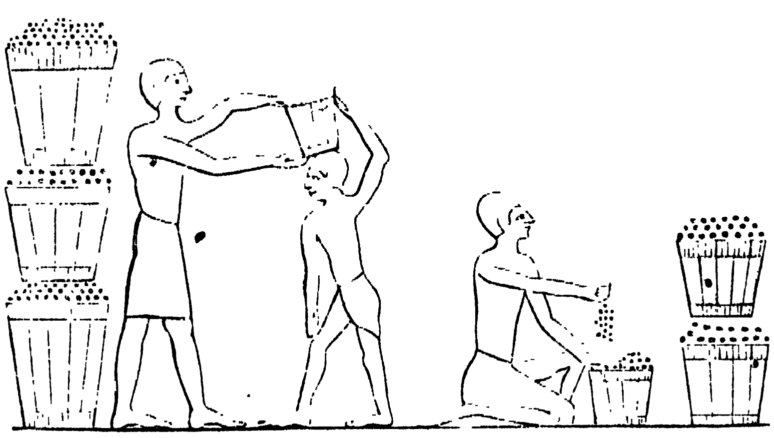
1271. Egyptian Wine-press.
Gwin-wryf Aiphtaidd.



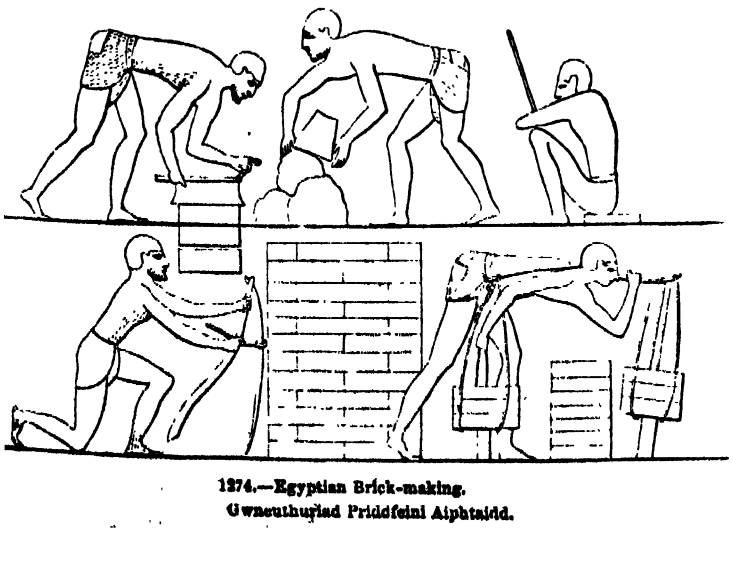
1269.—Egyptian Vintage.
Cynhauaf Gwin Aiphtaidd.



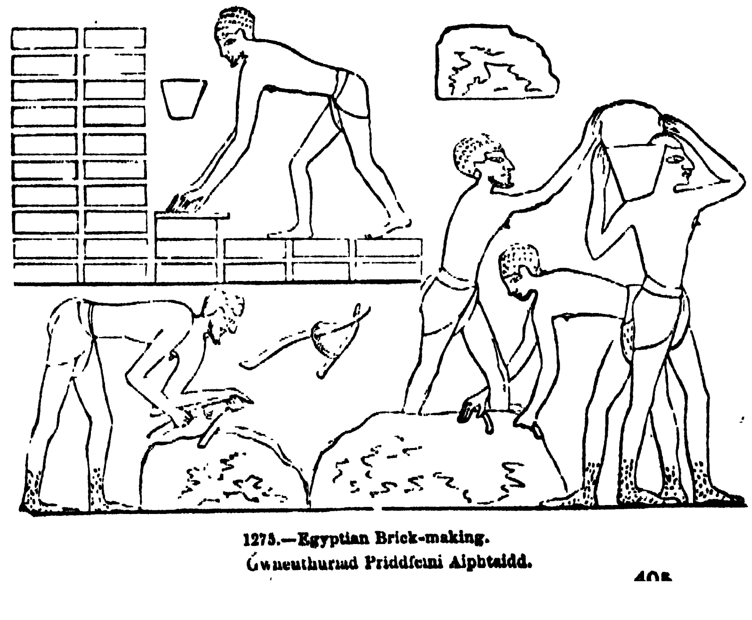
1272.—Egyptian Wine-press.
Gwin-wryf Aiphtaidd.



1270.—Carrying Grapes to Wine-press.
Cludo'r Grawn i'r Gwin-wryf.



1274.—Egyptian Brick-making.
Gwneuthuriad Priddfeini Aiphtaidd.



1275.—Egyptian Brick-making.
Gwneuthuriad Priddfeini Aiphtaidd.

all the numerous and complicated details necessary to complete the re-establishment, which had before his time been left imperfect—may be considered as his work.

We may form some idea of the irregularities to which the Israelites had become prone, by the points on which the record dwells as those in which they had of late much offended, and which they conceived themselves specially bound to observe by the terms of the covenant into which they had entered. These were, that they would not intermarry with the people of the land; that they would keep holy the Sabbath-day, not buying or selling thereon; and that they would in future observe the Sabbatical year.

The next matter to which Nehemiah turned his cares was to fill with a suitable population the city which was still so thinly peopled. The causes which had kept it from being properly occupied no longer existed, seeing that the city was now secured by gates and walls; but the people were not ready to abandon at once the homesteads which they had established in other places. The town would indeed gradually have acquired an adequate population; but this process was slow, and it was important that Jerusalem should at once enjoy a suitable population. The governor therefore prevailed upon the leading men of the nation to remove thither; others willingly followed, and every tenth man was chosen by lot to become an inhabitant of the holy city.

After this the sacred record gives an interesting account of the dedication of the newly-built walls. The ceremony was not only solemn and imposing in itself, but seems to have been used by the governor as a means of bringing the Levites and others together, that they might henceforth devote themselves to their proper duties. We are told that "they sought and brought the Levites from all their places to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness, with thanksgivings and songs, accompanied by cymbals, psalteries, and harps." Those who were skilled in sacred music were also assembled from all parts of the country, and, to prevent their dispersion, were placed in temporary villages (probably of booths) around Jerusalem.

On the great day of dedication the chief men of Judah and of the priests appeared upon the wall; and the musicians, divided into two bands, marched round the limits, while the singers, under their chief Jezrahiah, lifted their voices high in praise to God; the voices even of women and children mingled with the rejoicing songs and acclamations which that day caused "the joy of Jerusalem to be heard afar off." Sacrifices were abundantly offered, and supplied ample materials for the feast which closed one of the happiest days that Israel had seen.

It is commonly considered that after this the term of Nehemiah's commission expired, and he then repaired to Susa, and resumed his duties at court. But after some years (probably ten), having understood that the disorders which he had endeavoured to correct had again revived at Jerusalem, he obtained a renewal of his commission, and returned to the land of his fathers. This account is in itself highly probable, and is not only compatible with the facts which are known, but helps to remove some difficulties which without it are not easily solved. It is also certain, by his own account, that he was for a time away from Jerusalem (Neh. xiii. 6); and as circumstances seem to have been considerably altered on his return, his absence would appear to have been of some duration, agreeing with the explanation which has been given, which again receives further confirmation from the fact that the first commission was limited to twelve years.

Nehemiah found that in his absence the enemies and false friends of Israel had acquired great influence at Jerusalem, and had formed intimate connections of friendship or alliance with many Jews of rank and influence. Even Tobiah, the Ammonite, had established such relations, that his friend Eliashib, the high-priest, was able, without any outrage upon existing public feeling, to set apart one of the great store-chambers within the temple court, for his reception on his visits to Jerusalem. When Nehemiah heard of this, his indignation rose very high, not only because of the known character of Tobiah, but because it was in fact a profanation of the temple, seeing that the Ammonites were by the law excluded from the congregation of the Lord. All the moveables belonging to this person Nehemiah commanded to be cast forth, and the sacred stores to be replaced in the chamber.

The governor had soon occasion to perceive that the sacred services had become much neglected, through the inability of the Levites to obtain from the people their customary dues, whence they had been obliged to abandon their proper duties in search of the means of subsistence. This evil he also remedied, and the sacred stores were soon filled with corn, oil, and wine; and the magnificent ritual was once more restored to its former splendour.

The engagement which the people had formerly entered into against buying and selling on the Sabbath-day had also been very seriously infringed. "In those days," says the governor, "I saw some treading wine-presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves and lading asses; and also that on the Sabbath they brought into Jerusalem wine, grapes, and figs, and burdens of every kind." It also appears that the Phœnicians were in the habit of bringing fish for sale to Jerusalem—which is in itself an interesting fact—and that they did this without making any distinction between the Sabbath and other days, but brought their fish and sold it publicly on the holy day. The exemption for the sale of certain kinds of fish on the sacred day, which is conceded even in our northern latitudes, might seem to be more necessary in a warm climate, where fish can for only a short time be preserved. But the law of the Jewish Sabbath was very strict, and has ever been strictly interpreted; and Nehemiah, after remonstrating in very forcible language with the nobles of the land in this matter, adopted the very strong measure of directing the city gates to be kept shut from the beginning to the end of the Sabbath, and, to ensure rigid obedience to his orders, he committed the gates on these holy days to the charge of his own servants. On the few first Sabbaths in which the rules were enforced, the fish-sellers, and other persons bringing goods for sale to Jerusalem, remained all day under the walls of the town. But this gave offence to Nehemiah, who threatened, if this were done again, to resort to violent means of prevention. By this means he at length succeeded in doing away with all appearance of traffic, labour, and travel on the day which the Lord had commanded to be kept holy.

It was also discovered by Nehemiah that many persons, even among the Levites, had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab; which was in the highest degree contrary to the design of the Lord in setting apart the Israelites as a peculiar people among the nations, and had been proved by old experience to be subversive of the best interests of religion. One curious effect of these mixed marriages is particularly noticed, which is, that the children were unable to speak the language of the Jews, but expressed themselves in a mongrel dialect made up of the language of their fathers and their mothers. This evil was far more difficult to remedy than any of the former: but nothing could damp the zeal of Nehemiah in doing whatever he felt or knew to be right. He not only constrained those who had taken heathen wives to put them away, but when the character and position of the party laid him under peculiar obligations of sanctity, he displaced him from his office. Thus the grandson of the high-priest had married a daughter of Sanballat—the Samaritan governor whose proceedings had formerly been so offensive to Nehemiah and the Jews. This person he expelled altogether. Josephus informs us that this man's name was Manasseh; and that Sanballat, his father-in-law, by his influence at the Persian court, obtained permission to build a temple upon Mount Gerizim, like that at Jerusalem, and in which Jehovah was to be worshipped with similar services. Of this establishment he made his son-in-law high-priest. This arrangement attracted into Samaria many Jews who had married foreign wives, from whom they could not bring themselves to part, as well as many who had rendered themselves liable to punishment by other transgressions of the law. This tended considerably to aggravate the bitter enmity between the two nations; but it eventually served to correct the remaining idolatrous practices and tendencies of the Samaritans. Receiving the accounts of these matters through Josephus and other prejudiced writers, it behoves us to be cautious of receiving all the impressions they design to convey. The temple upon Mount Gerizim was undoubtedly a schismatical establishment. But seeing that, on the one hand, the Samaritans were anxious to worship Jehovah according to the regulations of Moses, while, on the other, the Jews, whether right or wrong, pertinaciously refused to receive their adhesion to the temple at Jerusalem, it is difficult to see what other choice they had than to build another temple for themselves. Besides, the obligation of adherence to one temple was imposed only upon the descendants of Abraham, and the Law made no provision for the case of a people desirous of worshipping Jehovah, but repelled from his altar by the Hebrews. And this may suggest that the original repulsion was in itself illegal, whatever good effects may in the end have resulted from it.

With this event the Canonical history of the Old Testament concludes. It may be collected, however, that the second rule of Nehemiah lasted at least ten years, or till towards the close of the reign of Darius Nothus, who is mentioned in Neh. xii. 22. At that time he must have been between sixty and seventy years of age, if, as is usually supposed, he was only between twenty and thirty when he first went to Jerusalem. That he lived to be an old man is thus rendered quite probable from the sacred history, and is expressly affirmed by Josephus.

SUNDAY LI.—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

THE father of Publius lay ill of the dysentery, by which he had been brought to the brink of the grave; and the apostle no sooner heard this than he entered the chamber in which the afflicted man lay, and, after having prayed, laid his hands upon him and restored him to health. When this was noised abroad, the people of the island hastened to bring their sick friends to obtain the like benefit, and they all received health and cure from the hands of the apostle. The good people of the island did all in their power to express their sense of favours so important. "They honoured us with many honours," says the narrator, "and when we departed they loaded us with such things as were necessary."

The departure did not take place till three months after the shipwreck; for not till then, when the winter had passed, was any vessel willing to leave for Italy. Then they embarked in another ship of Alexandria, doubtless a corn-ship, which had wintered at the island, and which "bore the sign of Castor and Pollux," the Dioscuri, whose special province it was, in the classical mythology, to succour persons in danger of shipwreck.

The ship put in at the port of Syracuse, on the eastern coast of Sicily, and then the capital of that island. Syracuse was founded by the Corinthians about seven hundred years before Christ; and the enterprising colonists, being greatly enriched by commerce, soon raised this, their principal seat, to great importance and magnificence. In its best state it was accounted the largest and richest city belonging to the Greeks. It was twenty-two miles in circuit, and was considered to rival Carthage in wealth. It was often styled *Quadriplex*, being divided into four parts, each of which was equal to a large city. The ancient writers are untired of expatiating on the fine prospects of Syracuse—its port, banked up with marble, and surrounded with elegant buildings—its magnificent public statues and monuments—and its splendid and commodious residences.

Syracuse long maintained its power as an independent state; and the Carthaginians and Athenians assaulted it in vain. But about two hundred years before Christ, it was taken by the Romans, although not until the siege had been protracted for three years by the mechanical contrivances of Archimedes. Syracuse remained a flourishing commercial town under the Romans; and although now no longer the chief city of the island, it still survives as a considerable town, belonging, with the rest of the island, to the kingdom of Naples. As there has always been much intercourse between Malta and Sicily, the ship had probably taken in some lading or passengers to discharge at Syracuse. Although Syracuse had even then declined from its ancient importance, it still exhibited the magnificence for which it had been renowned; and although this has now disappeared, it is still a place of some importance, having a population of eighteen thousand persons. Here the passengers landed, and remained three days, the ship having probably to discharge a portion of her cargo at this port.

Again departing, the vessel coasted along the eastern side of Sicily, and arrived in due course at Rhegium, nearly opposite Messina, and on the Italian side of the strait which separates Sicily from the peninsula. At this place, which still subsists under the name of Reggio, the ship tarried one day, when the wind, blowing from the south, became favourable to their passage through the strait, and brought them on the next day to Puteoli, on the north side of the Gulf of Cumæ, now called the Bay of Naples, and about eight miles north-west from the city of that name. This was the end of the voyage, as ships from Alexandria and the East usually put in and landed their cargoes and passengers, partly to avoid doubling the dreaded Promontory of Circeium, and partly because there was no commodious harbour nearer to Rome. Puteoli was thus well known to travelled Jews, who landed and embarked here in their journeys to and from Rome. This place was celebrated for its numerous hot springs, reputed to cure various diseases. Within its limits were thirty-five natural baths of different sorts of tepid water; and from these baths or pits of water, called in latin *putei*, the place is said to have derived its name of Puteoli. Baiæ, on the other side of the creek of Puteoli, and similarly noted for its warm springs, is frequently noticed by the Latin writers as a favourite resort of the emperors for relaxation or health, being in fact the Bath of Italy; and Puteoli partook of its distinction and prosperity, being connected with it by a line of villas. Puteoli is now called Pazzuoli, and has about ten thousand inhabitants.

At Puteoli Paul found Christian brethren, with whom he tarried for a week, and was then conducted towards Rome. At Appii Forum, a town upon the celebrated Appian Road from Rome to Capua, and about midway between Puteoli and Rome, from which it was distant fifty-one miles, Paul and his party seem to have taken rest, the probability of which circumstance had drawn several Christian brethren all the way from Rome to meet them. About half-way between this place and Rome there was another resting-place, called Tres Tabernæ (translated "three taverns"). This name has suggested to most commentators the probability that there were here three hostelries, or places for the entertainment of the numerous travellers upon this road. This may have been the *origin* of the name, but the place appears to have become a town, which in the time of Constantine was of sufficient consequence to be the seat of a bishopric. At Tres Tabernæ other brethren from Rome met the apostolical party, including probably many persons who had become personally acquainted with Paul in Greece and Asia Minor: and when he saw so many, who by coming so far to meet him evinced the interest they took in his labours and welfare, "he thanked God and took courage." He had long desired to see the Christians at Rome, and he was now grateful to God that he was permitted to do so, although in bonds.

At length they arrived at Rome—the imperial city—then the mistress of the world, and at the height of its external greatness and magnificence;—that marvellous city, whose dominion, which has passed away; whose religions, which have changed; and whose arts, laws, literature, and history, which are imperishable, have in all ages, even to this day, by their direct or indirect influences, held captive the minds of men, and ruled them as with a rod of iron.

At Rome the kind centurion, who had so much befriended the apostle, resigned his charge of the prisoners into the hands of the commander of the Prætorian cohort, called in the Authorized Version "the captain of the guard," to whose custody prisoners arriving from the provinces were usually consigned. We learn from Tacitus that the person who held this high command at the time to which our history belongs was Burrhus Afranius.

After a time the frivolous and malignant nature of the charges against Paul being known through the rescript of the governor Festus, and through the representations of the centurion, the apostle was allowed to remain in what was considered the easiest confinement consistent with his safe custody. He was permitted to live in a house which he hired for himself, in the charge of a soldier, to whose arm his own arm was chained, and who in consequence was always with him. This kind of custody was less averse to ancient Roman or Eastern habits than to ours; and Paul probably regarded it as little more than a petty annoyance, seeing that it interfered less than any other kind of custody with his great vocation of declaring the Gospel of Christ, which he freely preached to all who came to him.

One of the first steps taken by the apostle after his arrival was to call the chief of the Jews in Rome together. He had probably two objects in view in this: one, to vindicate himself from the suspicion of crime, or to convince them that the charges alleged against him were false; and the other, to explain to them the Gospel of Christ. He thus, in accordance with his general custom, seized the earliest opportunity of making known to his own countrymen the divine message which was committed to him: and he naturally supposed that charges highly unfavourable to his character had been sent forward against him to the Jews in Rome by those of Judea. They assured him that this was not the case, as no letters or messengers had arrived to create an impression to his disadvantage; and for the rest they said, "We desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest; for as concerning this sect, we know that it is everywhere spoken against."

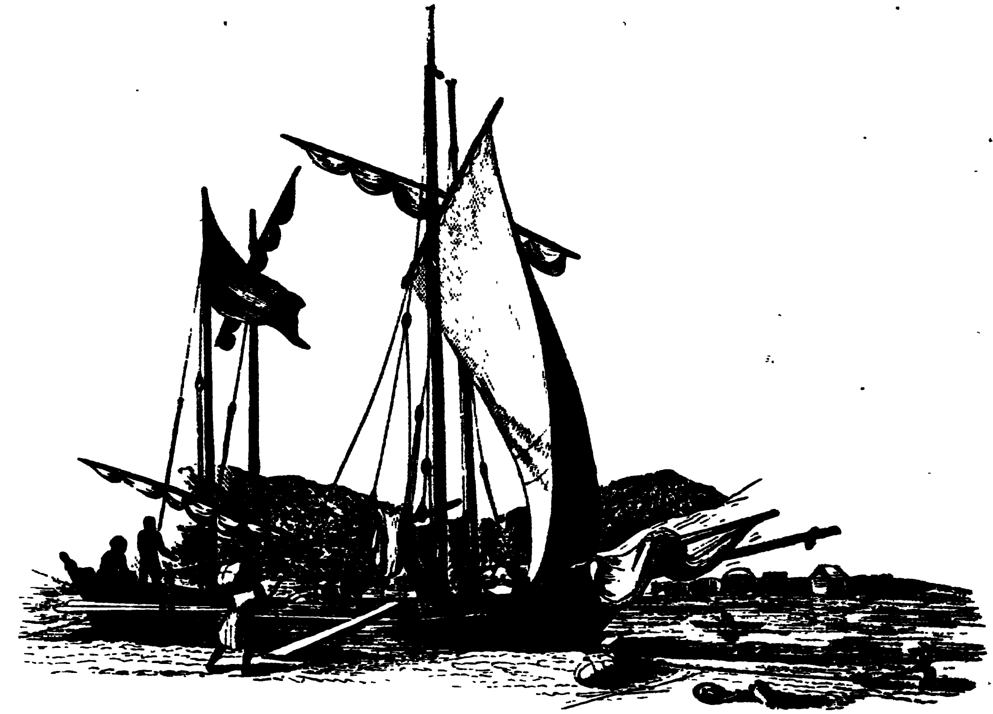
They accordingly came again on an appointed day to his lodging, when, from morning till night, he explained to them the doctrine of Christ, meeting their objections, answering their questions, and "persuading them concerning Jesus out of the law and out of the prophets."

Some of the auditors were awakened to further inquiry, but the general result was as usual discouraging, and the apostle plainly told them—"Be it known, therefore, unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles—*and they will hear it.*"

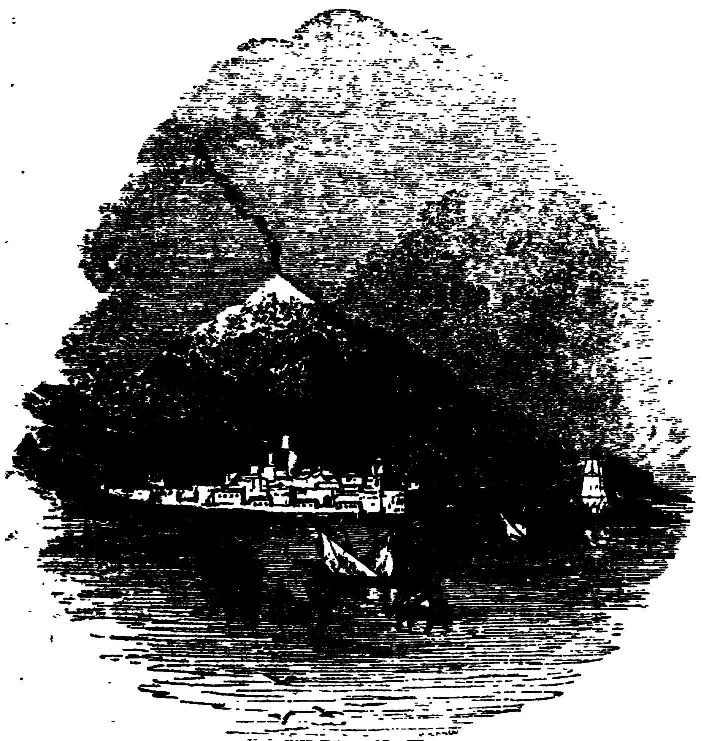
After this Paul remained "two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him; preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no man forbidding him."



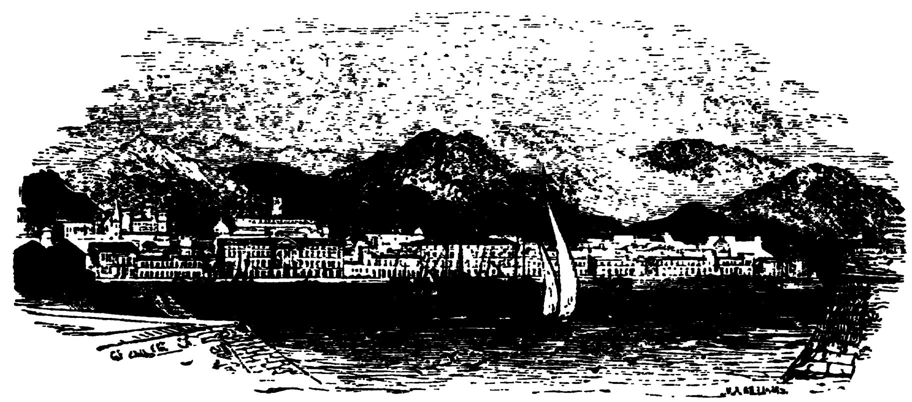
1276.—Malta. (Forbin.)



1273.—Ships of the Nile.
Llongau y Nilus.



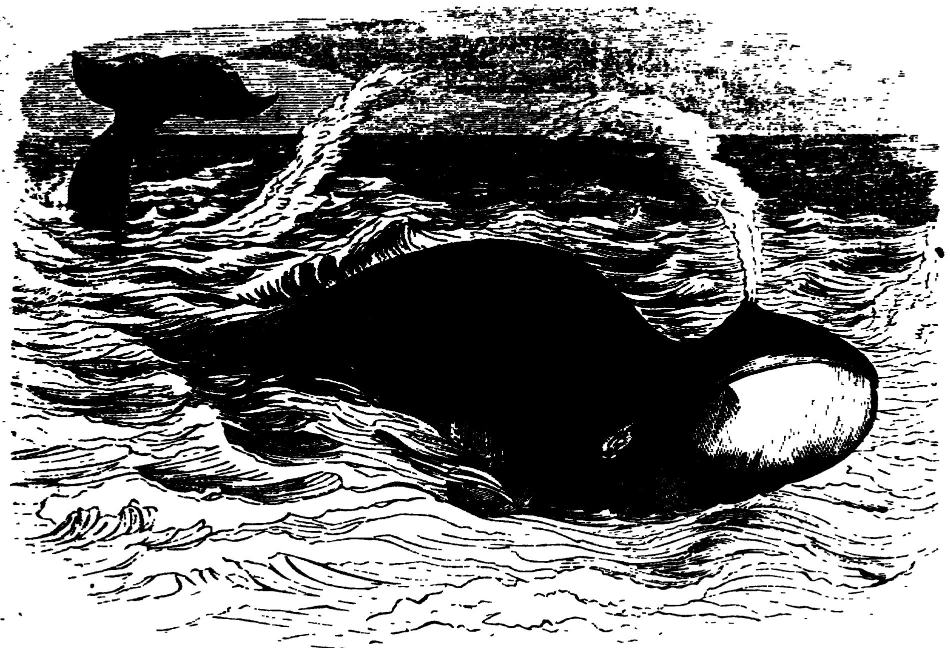
1277.—Syracuse.



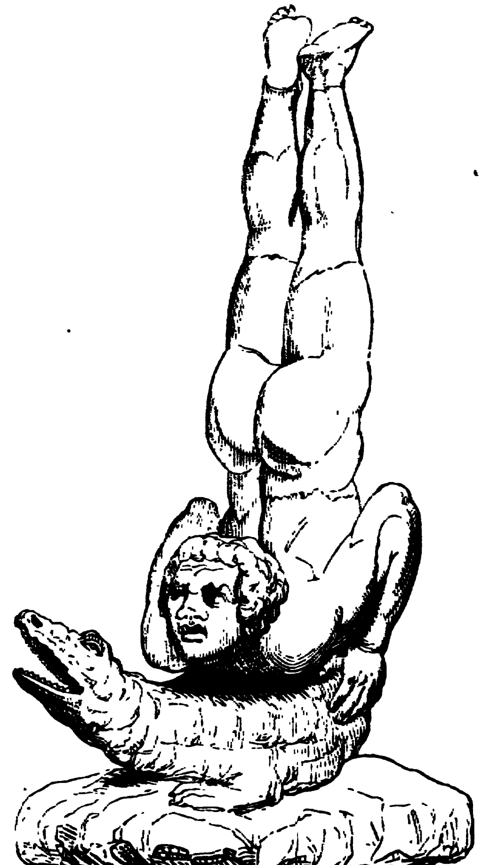
1278.—Palermo.



1279.—Bringing Gifts.
Dwyn Anrhegion.



1283.—Whale.
Morfil.



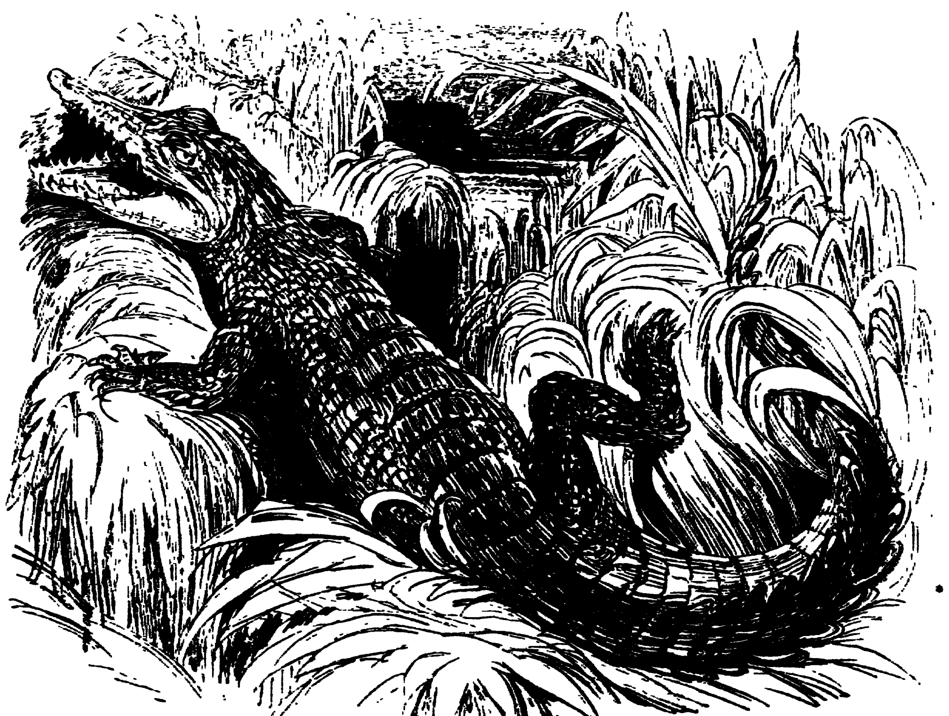
1282.—Egyptian Tumbler.
Ymdreigiwr Aiphtaidd.



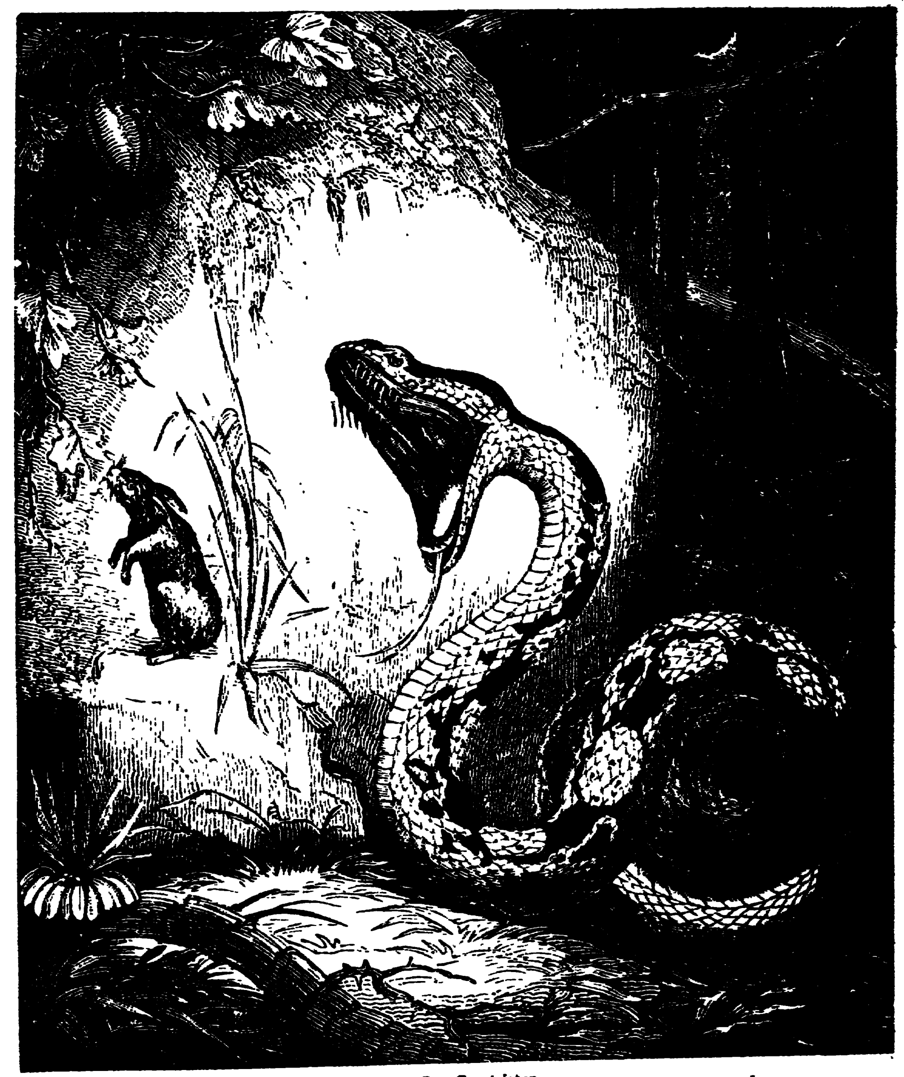
1280.—Common Crocodile.
Crocodil cyffredin.



1285.—Emperor Boa.



1281.—Crocodile.



1284.—Boa-Constrictor.
Yr Alsarph.

SUNDAY LII.—JOB.

THE last of the magnificent pictures which the Almighty is represented as offering to the contemplation of Job, is that of the Leviathan.

The Leviathan is often mentioned in the Scriptures: but there has been much diversity of opinion respecting the animal denoted by it. The crocodile, the whale, or some great serpent, has in turn been identified as the Leviathan of the Bible. The mass of opinion has been in favour of the crocodile, because the description in Job x. 2, cannot with propriety be applied to any other animal; but those who have reached this conclusion have been embarrassed by other texts which by no means agree with it.

We now begin to see our way through these difficulties, and to find that these different opinions may have been *all* right, and that we have been needlessly troubling ourselves through the unfounded notion that only one explanation could be right, and that all others must be wrong. A very eminent Hebrew scholar, Gesenius, whose works are replete with profound and various knowledge, has done much to give currency to a more satisfactory explanation.

The word Leviathan, traced to its etymological signification, denotes an animal *wreathed*, or gathering itself up in *folds*. This general term is applied to various animals—perhaps like our word 'Monster'—except that the word Leviathan is restricted by the idea of twisting or wreathing.

In Job iii. 8, and in Isa. xxvii. 1, it denotes some great and monstrous serpent. Indeed in the latter text it is twice expressly called such:—

> "Leviathan, the fleet serpent;
> Leviathan, the coiling serpent."

And as in this text the phrase appears to be applied symbolically to a country (Babylon) far to the east of the writer, it is far from unlikely that it may have been founded on some obscure accounts which had reached the West respecting the boa-constrictor of the regions still farther east; for Babylon being the most eastern country of which the Palestine Jews had any distinct knowledge, they would naturally refer to it, in loose symbolical usage, any information which reached them concerning the monsters of the far East. There is no *necessity*, indeed, for this reference; but it arises out of the consideration that the word Leviathan is habitually applied to monstrous foreign animals.

In all other passages, it denotes a great sea-monster, particularly perhaps the whale, but not excluding any other monstrous and imperfectly known forms inhabiting the great deep. There can be little doubt that this is the meaning of the word in, for instance, Ps. civ.:—

> "The earth is full of thy riches,
> So is this great and wide sea,
> Wherein are things creeping innumerable,
> Both small and great beasts.
> There go the ships;
> There is that Leviathan, whom thou hast made to sport
> therein,
> These all wait upon thee," &c. (verses 25–27.)

The word probably means a whale or other large fish in the other passages in which it occurs, although, as it is in most of these used as figuratively for a cruel enemy, the particular application may be somewhat uncertain. It is worthy of remark that the Jews themselves make the Leviathan a great fish; and as everything great became very great indeed when viewed through Rabbinical eyes, we are not surprised to find it in their accounts so great that one day it swallowed another fish which was nearly a thousand miles long. There were two, say they, of these Leviathans at first, male and female; but as, if they had both lived and propagated, the world would have been destroyed, the female was killed and laid up in salt for the great feast of the Messiah in the latter days.

It is now all but universally agreed, as already intimated, that the Leviathan of Job xl. is the Egyptian crocodile. This is so obvious, that no one could ever have attempted to make anything else of it, but from the necessity under which he might erroneously conceive himself to be of making *all* the Scriptural allusions to the Leviathan to centre in one and the same animal. In this case it might be and has been contended, that, although the present passage might agree best with the crocodile, yet the balance of all the passages was in favour of the whale; and that if any one passage more clearly indicated a whale than Job xl. indicated a crocodile, then it was necessary that we should find the whale in the latter also. But when freed from the embarrassment produced by such considerations, the reader will clearly recognise the crocodile in the passage now before us. Two points—the strong armour of the animal described, and his formidable rows of teeth—are almost peculiar to the crocodile among water animals, and are wholly inapplicable to the whale, which has neither scales nor teeth, and which is in fact ordinarily taken with "fish-spears," the very mode against which the Leviathan is here said to be invulnerable:—

> "Do men in company lay snares for him?
> Do they divide him among the merchants?
> Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons?
> Or his head with fish-spears?" (verses 6, 7.)

Again:—

> "I will not be silent concerning his limbs,
> And his strength, and the beauty of his armour.
> Who can uncover the surface of his garment?
> Who will approach his jaws?
> Who will open the doors of his face?
> The rows of his teeth, how terrible!
> His glory is in his strong shields,
> United with each other as with a close seal."
> (verses 12–14.)

As we write these lines an anecdote in the paper of the day meets our view, which strikingly illustrates the power of the crocodile's jaws and teeth, to which such pointed allusion is here made. It describes a party of naval officers as being assailed by an alligator while elephant-hunting in Ceylon. One of the party in self-defence thrust his gun into the open mouth of the assailant, and it was afterwards found that the barrel was completely bitten in two in one place, and deeply indented by the teeth of the animal in the other.

By the time that the sublime address, to parts of which we have thus adverted, was closed, Job had become impressed with an overwhelming sense of the presumption and irreverence of his former discourses, and expressed his penitence in the strongest terms of self-condemnation, concluding with:—

> "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear,
> But now mine eye hath seen thee:
> Wherefore I abhor myself;
> And repent in dust and ashes."

By this acknowledgment the way is prepared for the vindication of the piety and integrity of Job by the Almighty, and consequently for the decision of the great question which had been the subject of controversy. He according decides that the friends of Job had "not spoken that which was right" in contending that the misery of Job was inflicted by God in punishment for his sins; and, that Job had spoken truth in maintaining that no man's character could be ascertained by his outward condition. To confirm this decision the Lord "blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning." His possessions were doubled, he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand she-asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters—and in all the land no damsels were found so fair as the daughters of Job. After all his troubles the patriarch lived one hundred and forty years, and having seen the fourth generation of his descendants, died, "being old and satisfied with days."

END OF JOB.

SUNDAY LII.—ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

WITH these words the apostolical record concludes. Why Luke closed his history at this point is unknown. It may be that he was not afterwards the companion of Paul; or that he may have been himself removed by death. It is agreed on all hands that he did not attend the apostle in his subsequent travels; and we should infer from the conclusion of the book, that he did not survive the apostle, as it is almost incredible that, in case he did, he should not have mentioned his release and death. It is the uniform account of antiquity that Luke, after the transactions with which the Acts of the Apostles closes, passed over into Achaia, where he lived a year or two, and then died at the age of eighty-four years.

The reader is naturally anxious to know something further of the life and labours of that great apostle whose course he has followed with so much of interest and instruction. The materials for this purpose are but scanty, and not altogether satisfactory; but they have been collected and arranged with great care by Cave, Lardner, Neander, and others; and we cannot better occupy the small space left to us than in stating the result of such researches.

Paul's imprisonment, so far from reducing him to an inactive condition, opened to his eager mind new and extensive means of usefulness. During his confinement, anxiety for the extension of the kingdom of God, and for the prosperity of the churches which he had founded, occupied him far more than his personal concerns. As all persons had free access to him, his opportunities of preaching the Gospel were not few. Through the soldiers who relieved one another in standing guard over him, it became known among their comrades of the prætorian cohort, and hence to a wider extent in the city, that this remarkable prisoner was in confinement not for any civil offence, but for his zeal in behalf of the new religion; and this tended to promote it, since a cause for which its foremost advocate had suffered the loss of all things was sure of attracting attention. By his example the Roman Christians were also roused to publish the truth with zeal and boldness.

The concerns of the churches in Asia Minor also engaged the apostle's solicitude, and to this we owe several of those invaluable Scriptures, known as the Epistles of Paul, which have become the heritage of ages, and which alone would be rich and ample fruits of his imprisonment. The investigations concerning the dates and circumstances of these epistles do not belong to this place, although the intimations which they contain afford the landmarks which direct our course.

Up to a certain point we can form a tolerably clear notion of the apostle's condition and course of proceeding at Rome: but beyond that point all is uncertain and obscure. The first question which arises is, whether he ended this confinement with martyrdom, or whether he was released from it, and entered afresh upon his apostolical labours? The decision of this question depends partly upon the depositions of historical witnesses, and partly on the result of an examination of Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy. The question is, whether this epistle, which was evidently written during a confinement at Rome, must be classed among those which were written during his first imprisonment, or whether we may assume the existence of a second? The narratives of the fourth century, which allege that he was set at liberty and published the Gospel in Spain, cannot be taken into account, for they may all have been founded upon what he says in his Epistle to the Romans of his intentions of visiting Spain. More attention is due to the testimony of a man who was in part a contemporary and probably a disciple of the apostle. Clement of Rome says expressly, in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, that Paul suffered martyrdom after he had travelled to the boundaries of the West. By this expression we naturally understand Spain; and although Clement might have had in view some other place or country, and perhaps even Britain, as some allege, yet we cannot in any case suppose that a person writing, as Clement did, at Rome, could intend by "the farthest limits of the West" that very city. From this account of Clement's, if we must infer that Paul carried into effect his intention of travelling into Spain, or that at least he went beyond Italy, we shall also be obliged to admit that he was released from his confinement at Rome. A close examination of the Second Epistle to Timothy indicates a very dissimilar set of circumstances from those which attended the apostle's first imprisonment, and shows feelings and expectations entirely different from those which are known from internal evidence to have been written during the first confinement. It is in fact a solemn farewell to his beloved adherent, in the *knowledge* that his end was approaching:—"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day." All comparison of circumstances tends to show that these impressions were not applicable to the first confinement, from which he confidently expected to be released; and therefore the conclusion is inevitable, and in accordance with the intimation of Clement, that he *was* released, and that the Second Epistle to Timothy was written during a subsequent and final imprisonment.

Now if Paul was released from his first imprisonment, it must have been before the persecution against the Christians, raised by the conflagration of Rome in the year 64; for had he been at that time a prisoner, he would most assuredly not have been spared; and it agrees with other chronological data, that after more than two years' imprisonment, he regained his freedom in the latter end of 62 or the beginning of 63—a result of the proceedings which, in the circumstances described in these pages, is by no means improbable, but such as the reader is naturally led to expect. The accusation of raising a tumult at Jerusalem was proved to be unfounded; and the inherent antagonism of Christianity to the religion of the Roman state had not then been so understood as to attract public attention. It could not altogether have escaped notice; but no definite law existed on the subject, and under Nero, who derided the established religion and gave himself little concern about the ancient Roman enactments, such a point might the more easily be waived. The friends whom Paul had gained by his behaviour during his confinement would probably exert their influence in his favour. Thus he might and probably did regain his freedom; and, as Neander justly observes, "the ancient tradition that he was beheaded, and not crucified like Peter, if true, favours his not having suffered death in the persecution of 64; for had he been put to death in that persecution, so much regard would not have been paid to his Roman citizenship as to spare the hated leader of a detested sect from the more painful and ignominious mode of execution.

We have therefore to assume that Paul was released from his first confinement, and did not perish in the persecution of the year 64.

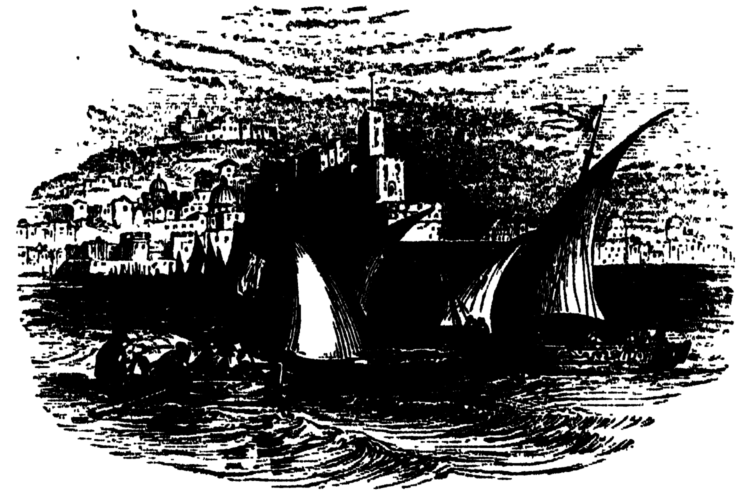
We know from the epistles written during his first confinement what Paul intended to do in case he obtained his liberty; and by comparing these intentions with the fact recorded by Clement, some notion of his subsequent proceedings may be obtained.

Before his confinement, Paul had formed the intention of visiting Spain; and the testimony of Clement leads to the belief that he eventually fulfilled that intention. But during his imprisonment it appears that he altered his views, and concluded to visit once more the field of his early labours in Lesser Asia, and a question arises as to which of these intentions he first executed after his release? It would be possible that after his release he travelled first into Spain; that he there exerted himself in the establishment of Christian churches, and then revisited the former sphere of his ministry; and that he was on his return to the West, in order to close there his apostolical commission, but, before he could reach his destination, was detained and put to death at Rome. But the want of any memorial of Paul's labours in Spain does not favour the supposition that he spent any length of time in that country; and hence the other explanation, that he first renewed his labours in the East, and then proceeded to Spain where he was soon seized and sent a prisoner to Rome, and there beheaded, seems to have the best claim upon our confidence.

Under this explanation, it may not be altogether impracticable to trace the course of the apostle's journeys. It seems, then, that he in the first place executed his intention of revisiting the churches in Asia Minor, and found them fallen into disorder, which he laboured hard to rectify. After spending some time in those parts, he left Ephesus to visit the churches in Macedonia. On his way thither he appears to have revisited the island of Crete. The circumstances of his former visit to that island during the stormy voyage which ended in the wreck at Malta, have been already noticed. It does not appear that there were then any Christians in the island, as Luke does not there, as usual with him, record the kind attentions of Christian brethren; and it is there-



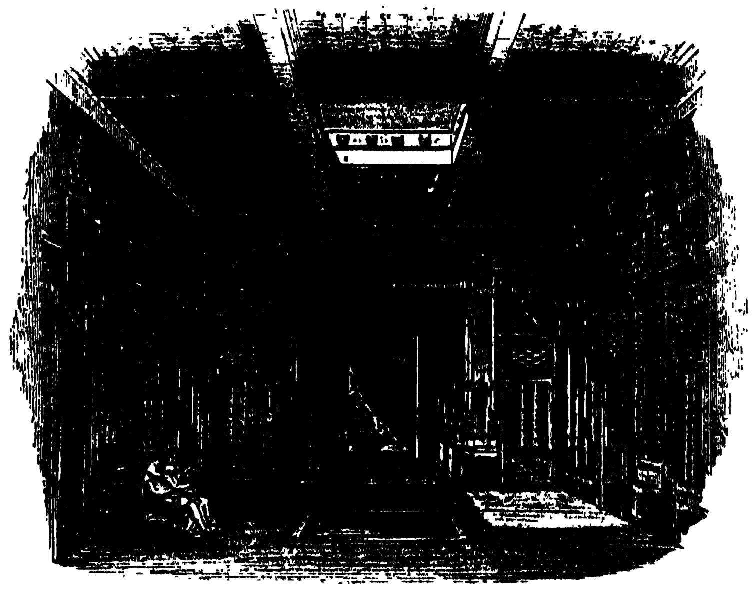
1286.—The Mamertine Prison.
(The subterranean cell in which Paul and Peter were confined.)
Y Carchar Mamertinaidd.
(Y carchar tanddaearol lle y carcharwyd Paul a Petr.)



1287.—Naples from the Sea.
Naples o'r Môr.



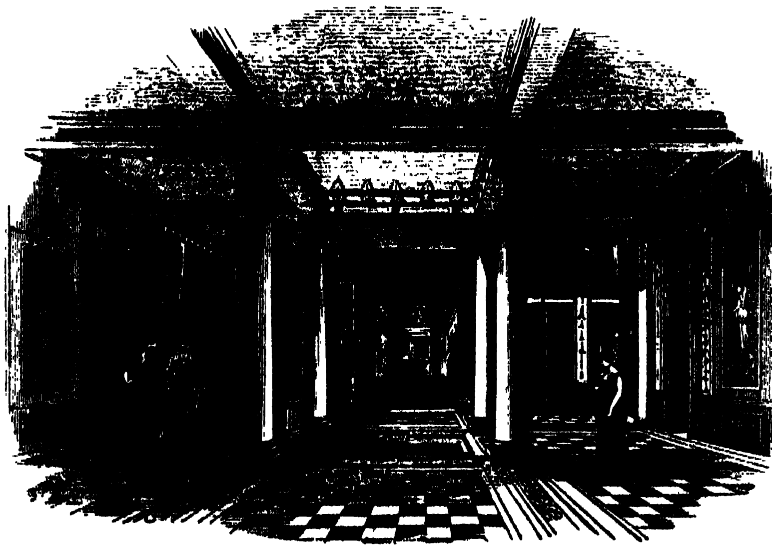
1288.—Messina.



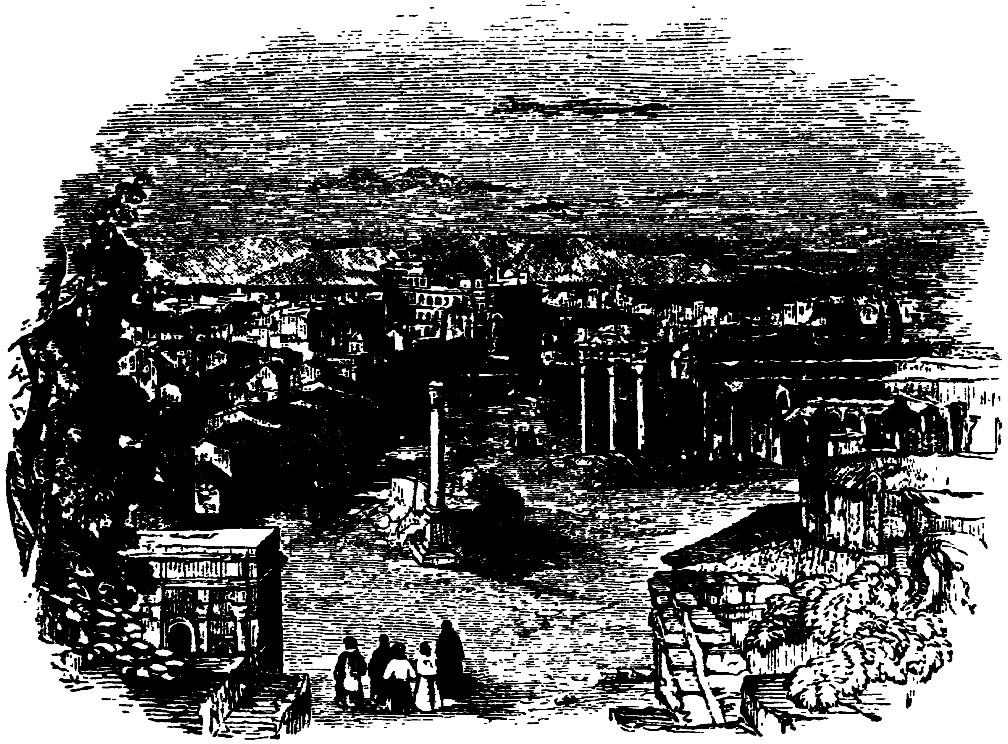
1290.—Room in Roman House.
Ystafell mewn Ty Rhufeinig.



1289.—Street in Messina.
Heol yn Messina.



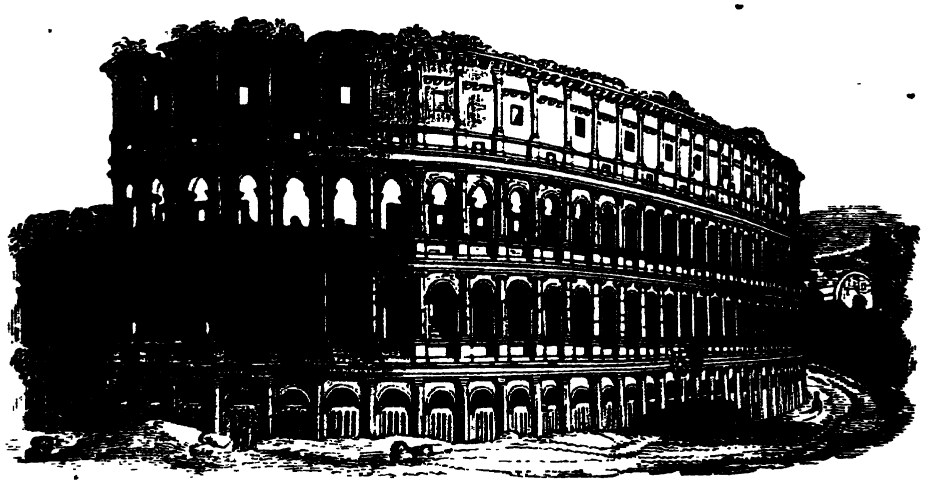
1291.—Atrium of Roman House.
Atrium Ty Rhufeinig.



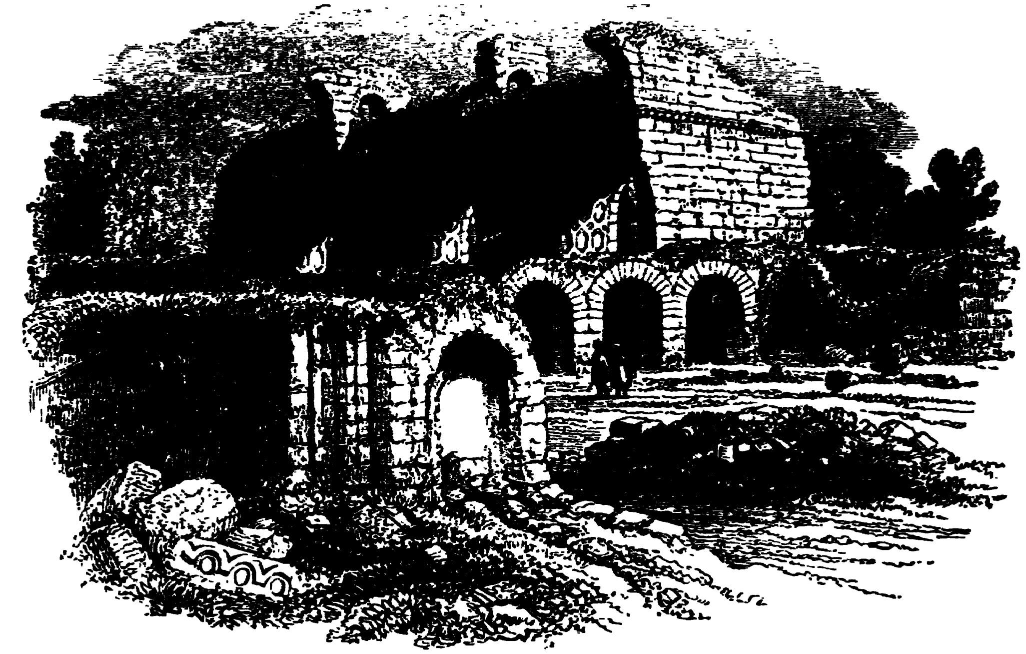
1293.—Ruins of the Forum at Rome.
Adfeilion y Dadleudy yn Rhufain.



1297.—Coin of Nero.
Arian Bath Nero.



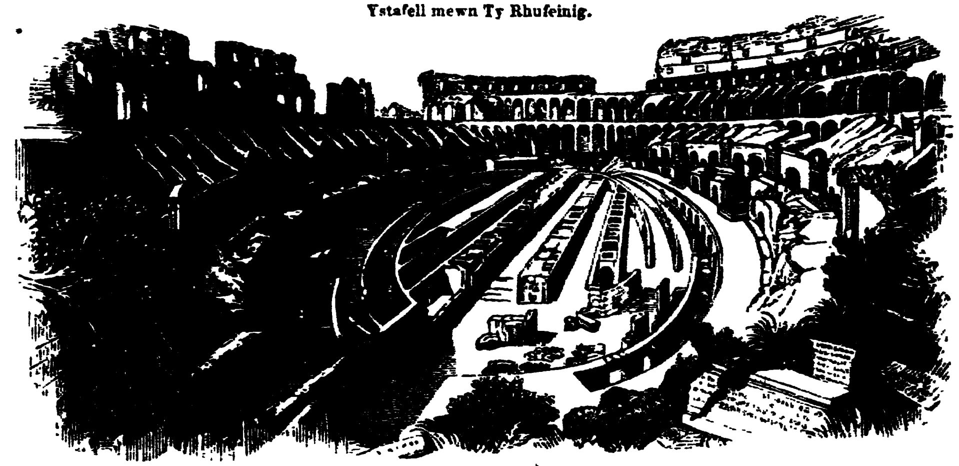
1295.—Exterior of Coliseum.
Amddiffynfa o'r tu allan.



1294.—Ruins of the Palace of Nero.
Adfeilion Palas Nero.



1292.—Room in Roman House.
Ystafell mewn Ty Rhufeinig.



1296.—Interior of Coliseum.
Amddiffynfa o'r tu mewn.

fore probable Paul even then formed the intention of planting the Gospel of Christ upon its shores. After having accomplished this intention, he left Titus to complete the work he had commenced, and proceeded to Macedonia, whence he wrote the Epistle to Titus, which exists in the Christian Scriptures. The apostle had then the prospect of spending the winter at Nicopolis, and wished Titus to join him there. There were many places of this name; but it is supposed that the present was the one in Epirus, which was built by Augustus to commemorate his great victory at Actium.

It would seem, however, that circumstances induced the apostle to go back to Ephesus, where he left Timothy, and once more proceeded westward. It was now probably that he executed his long-cherished intention of visiting Spain, as already intimated, and was from thence sent as a prisoner to Rome. The Second Epistle to Timothy, which affords an important clue to these movements, shows that the situation of Paul in the imperial city was by no means what it had been during his previous imprisonment. It was then universally allowed that he was in custody for no usual or political offence, but only for preaching the Gospel, and many were encouraged by his example boldly to confess their faith; whereas *now* he was in fetters as an "evil doer" (2 Tim. ii. 9); for all Christians were then regarded at Rome as criminals, and only a few had courage openly to avow themselves as his friends and companions in the faith of Jesus. *Now*, he considered his martyrdom far more probable than his release; whereas before, his deliverance had seemed by far the more probable event. His feelings in the prospect of that event are inimitably expressed: this, his last epistle—his elevated composure, his self-forgetfulness, his tender fatherly care for his disciple Timothy, his concern for the cause of the Gospel, which he was about to leave exposed to so many attempts to adulterate it; yet his confidence in the divinity of that cause, and of its certain triumph over every obstacle, rose high above every doubt or fear, being based upon the almightiness of Him who watched its progress and conducted all its developments.

With the particulars of the last scene of all in the life of this great benefactor to mankind we are unacquainted, and are not even certain of the year in which he received the crown which the Righteous Judge had laid up for him. It was doubtless in one of the last years of Nero's reign, and probably in or about the year 67 A.D. The general account, which rests on no certain authority, and which has been shown to be scarcely compatible with the facts of the case, alleges that Paul and Peter were at Rome in A.D. 64; and that they both perished in the furious and bloody persecution which was in that year excited against the Christians in consequence of the dreadful fire which raged for a whole week in the imperial city, and of which they were most falsely said to have been the authors. At this time it is alleged that Peter was crucified, while Paul was, as a Roman citizen, beheaded. That he was put to death at Rome, and that by being beheaded, is highly probable, although both the time and the occasion appear to be in this tradition erroneously stated. The prison in which Paul and Peter are supposed to have been confined is still shown at Rome; and it is alleged that Paul was beheaded at a place called the Salvian Waters, about three miles from Rome, and that he was buried in the Ostian Way, where a magnificent church was afterwards erected over his supposed sepulchre. But the name of Paul needeth not such memorials. His record is on high; and his memory is embalmed, beyond the wreck of worlds, in the thousands of immortal souls, who, through his living ministrations and his imperishable words, have been brought to Jesus, and who now bear their triumphal palms in that innumerable host of "all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, who have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

We are unwilling to quit the great apostle whose labours we have endeavoured to trace, without recalling the attention of the reader to the leading points of a character of inferior interest to none which the Scriptures offer, and perhaps as difficult to understand distinctly and truly to appreciate as are those of Moses and David. The contradictions which go to make up human character, usually consist of qualities and defects warring against each other, and of virtues and vices which might seem to exclude each other. But in the character of Paul, the antagonism seems to be that not of virtues and contrary vices, but of opposing virtues. Under this point of view, Paul almost stands alone. Never was man more equal, or more various. He was humble, yet never himself cast down; he was most gentle, yet terrible to those who had by their bad faith compromised the great cause to which all his energies were devoted. He was wise and prudent, yet possessed of an ardour which irresistibly carried him onward to the accomplishment of his designs, and was endowed with a frankness which no fears could check or deference arrest. Firm in danger, and unshaken in affliction, he was yet careful of his safety, and never exposed his life or person to needless risk. Of indefatigable activity, a severe taskmaster upon himself, and indifferent to his lot, so that the great objects which he had set before him were advanced, no man ever possessed a heart more tender, or a soul more open to the peaceful emotions of friendship and joy. His will had all the tenacity and his conduct all the perseverance essential to the accomplishment of great enterprises: whatever he willed, he willed with his whole heart; half-measures and partial successes were both unpleasant to him; he threw himself wholly into every undertaking which his judgment approved, or to which his duty called him, and he deemed nothing accomplished while anything remained to be done.

The example of Paul shows very clearly that the points which constitute a man's character and give him his individuality among men, remain unchanged under circumstances which entirely alter his sentiments and condition. In this respect we see that Paul was the same under the Gospel as under the Law. He had the same ardour, the same force of will, the same moral courage in coming forward to take great responsibilities upon him. He has changed his weapons, and his course is different, but we recognise the same champion whose ragings under Judaism have become heroisms under Christ. Before his conversion Paul had already become a man of note among the Jews; and it may be safely said that in any age, in any country, in any moral or social condition of a people—a man of his character and genius would, according to all ordinary probabilities, have become great among his fellows—must have taken a chief part in whatever religious, political, or moral movement the circumstances of the age might originate. The ordinary circumstances of life would have been insufficient to exercise and regulate the mighty energies which were bound up in him; and when it pleased the Almighty to press them into the service of the Gospel, not only was one who would have probably become the most bitter enemy of the cause turned into its friend, but Paul himself received a task sufficient to occupy even to the uttermost all the peculiar talents and powers which had been given to him. This task was the greatest that man could receive. Under God Moses formed a people for his service; and under Him Paul became the chief instrument of throwing open the doors of the New Covenant to a far more numerous and a mightier host, and of extending to the whole race of Adam higher privileges than those which had till then been specially reserved for Abraham's children.

The dignity of his appointment to his great mission was commensurate to the greatness of the occasion; and with what sublimity of genius, of eloquence, of devotedness, and of virtue did he not embrace and accomplish his grand vocation! And all that he did was done, and all he suffered was suffered, without any taint of that sin by which angels fell.

END OF ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

SUNDAY LII.—BIBLE HISTORY.

FROM the account which has been given it will be seen that Nehemiah was the principal and most active agent in the re-establishment of the Jewish nation. Zerubbabel appears to have done little more than give the cause of the restoration the sanction of his high rank and his name, while Ezra seems to have much confined his attention to ecclesiastical affairs; but in Nehemiah we see the ever active and zealous ruler, to whom nothing that concerned the welfare of his people was too little or too great. Jerusalem awaited him, as it were, in order to arise from its ruins; and there is perhaps more resemblance between him and Moses than at the first sight appears. But the age of the Old Testament miracles had passed, and the history of Nehemiah offers none of those splendid events which shine forth in that of Moses. It offers few astonishing facts, and few very great difficulties; and hence perhaps Nehemiah has not received all that justice and admiration which his noble character and great administrative talents demand. The credit which he enjoyed at the Persian court does indeed explain his enterprise, and accounts for the power which enabled him to surmount the impediments by which the course of former governors had been stayed. But to undertake this great design he needed much more than the favour of a king—he needed much virtue and much faith, and a large measure of both faith and virtue had been given to him. His free choice to abandon the ease and luxury of the Persian court, as Moses did that of Egypt, in order to pass his best years in an impoverished country, in a city still in ruins, and among a discouraged people, evinces no common force of character and nobleness of spirit. His remarkable disinterestedness, and his perseverance in carrying out under all discouragements whatever he undertook, are qualities rarely witnessed in an Eastern governor, and perhaps never in the same degree manifested even in the West. Prudent and circumspect in his councils—careful and taking time to inform himself thoroughly before he began to act; but then resolute in executing his plans, and in going to the very root of the evils he desired to remedy—Nehemiah was the very man at that time needed by the Jewish people, and whom therefore God in his great mercy bestowed upon them. He detected and confounded the miserable plots of his enemies, or despised and braved them; and with calm and deliberate courage awaited the dangers from which he was urged to flee. If the glory of re-establishing is second only to that of founding a nation, it is no profanation of the memory of Moses to utter the name of Nehemiah—his ardent and yet humble imitator—in the same breath with his; and whatever relative rank may be assigned to him among the many great men whom Israel produced, none will gainsay his claim to a chief place among the benefactors of his country.

END OF BIBLE HISTORY.





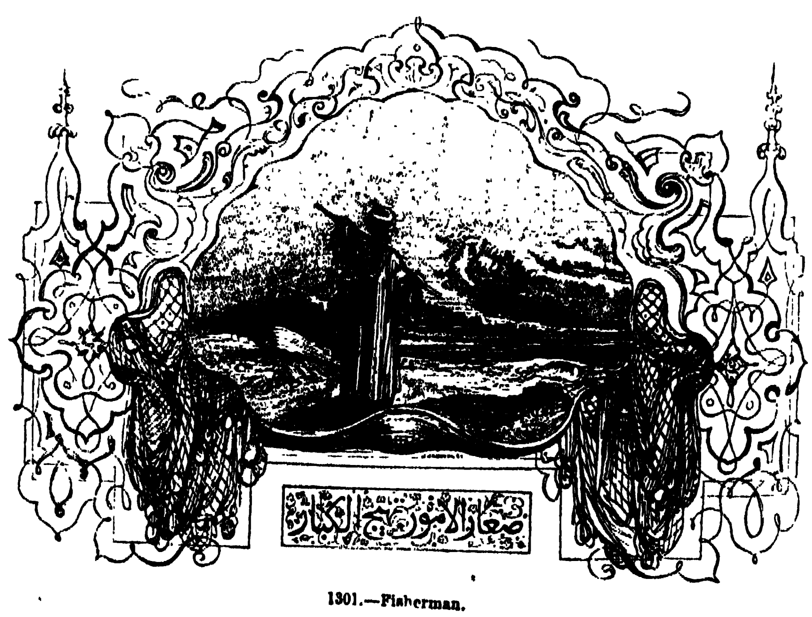
1298.—Fisherman and Net.
Pysgodwr a Rhwyd.



1299.—Selling Fish.
Gwerthu Pysgod.



1300.—Fisherman and Fish.
Pysgodwr a Physgod.



1301.—Fisherman.
Pysgodwr.



1302.—Bearers of Burdens.
Cludwyr Beichiau.

GEOGRAPHY

OF

THE HOLY LAND;

DESCRIBING

THE MOUNTAINS;
GEOLOGY AND MINERALOGY;
VOLCANIC INDICATIONS AND EARTHQUAKES;
VALLEYS, PLAINS, AND DESERTS;
LAKES AND RIVERS, &c., &c.

WITH A

COMPENDIUM OF SCRIPTURE GEOGRAPHY.

ACCOMPANIED WITH

Coloured Maps, and Illuminated Engravings.

LIST OF MAPS.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE HOLY LAND.

CHAPTER I.—MOUNTAINS.

Palestine is a small territory on the western borders of Asia, fronting the Mediterranean, being the south-western portion of Syria. On the north this territory is bounded by the Lebanon mountains; but its southern border is lost in the open desert which separates Palestine from Egypt, and which formed a kind of neutral ground between the two countries. As, however, it is necessary to take some line of boundary here, in order that the length of the country from north to south may be stated, it cannot be far wrong to draw it from the stream of El Arish (supposed to be the Scriptural "River of Egypt"), eastward to a point about twenty-five geographical miles south of the Dead Sea, on the borders of that valley which extends between that Sea and the Gulf of Akabah. Assuming this southern boundary, and fixing the northern one at the parallel of the stream which flows from Lebanon into the sea about five miles to the north of Sidon, Palestine will appear to be comprehended between 30° 40′ and 33° 36′ of northern latitude; and the length of a line drawn from the northern line to the southern, through the centre of the country, will not be less than one hundred and eighty miles.

The eastern border of Palestine is well defined, in nearly a straight line, by the river Jordan and its lakes; but the opposite border, that of the sea-coast, spreads out to the south-south-west, whereby the width of this strip of country gradually increases southward, so that, on arriving near the southern border, the breadth of the land is found to be about thrice as great as in the uttermost north. The line of extreme breadth is embraced between 33° 45′ and 35° 30′ of eastern longitude, being, in that latitude, ninety-two geographical miles; but the *least* breadth of this territory in the north does not exceed twenty miles, and the average breadth cannot be overstated at about fifty miles.

This is the proper Palestine, the land of Canaan, the Holy Land, the land of Promise. But, for historical purposes, it is quite necessary that the first of these names should be understood to include the domains beyond the Jordan, which were as much in the occupation of the Hebrew people, and belong as much to their history, as the territory west of that river. This inclusion will give to Palestine the districts of Argob and of Bashan, of Gilead, and the country southward to the river Arnon, which divided the Hebrew territory from that of Moab. With this enlargement, the length of the country, regarded as a whole, is not increased; and the line of extreme breadth may still be sought in the south. A view of the map, however, shows that the *average* breadth now bears a much higher proportion than in the separate measurement of the western country. *There* the extreme breadth is little more than an accident of the southern boundary line; and the average breadth bears no proportion to it: but now, in viewing the whole together, giving the country an addition of breadth in its narrowest part, and none in its widest, the previous disproportion between the extreme and the average measurements becomes greatly reduced; and this result is obtained by the increase in the latter, while the former remains the same.

Taking this larger view of the country, the resulting effect will be that its length remains at one hundred and eighty miles, but its average breadth is increased to about sixty-five miles. We have also endeavoured to form some estimate of the superficial extent of the whole country, and find room to calculate it at about eleven thousand geographical square miles. This does not give a superficial extent equal to one-fourth of England (with Wales), or more than two-fifths of Scotland, Ireland, or Portugal. Bavaria and Sardinia offer an area about twice as large; that of Denmark is about one-third larger: but, according to the estimate we have made, the area of Palestine is nearly double that of Wales, Wirtemberg, or Tuscany. Thus, as to mere extent, the country can only be compared to some of the smaller European states, of which Hanover, Belgium, Switzerland, the Papal States, and the island of Sicily appear to offer the nearest approximation. But the real surface is much greater than this estimate and these comparisons would imply: for Palestine being essentially a hilly country, the sides of the mountains and slopes of the hills enlarge the actual surface to an extent which does not admit of calculation.

But, with all allowances, Palestine remains so small a country, that undue importance might seem to be given to it by the extent to which its history is carried, did we not bear in mind that a country only gives a name to the history of the men by whom it has been occupied—that it is a history of human conduct and passion, of human hearts and minds, the operations of which may be as impressively and importantly developed, and generally are more so, on a small arena as on one that is large. It is this which, in ancient and modern times, has given importance to the histories of spots as small as, or even smaller than, Palestine. It is, perhaps, because the springs of human action in such cases are more clearly displayed, and that all the moving personages of one time are seen in circumstances of real collision or comparison, acting with or acting upon each other—that he who takes up history as a part of the study of man, seldom thinks of seeking instruction but where the principles of human action are exhibited with *concentrated* effect, either through the physical necessities of a confined territory, or by the moral action of a representative government. All history, ancient or modern, conveys true instruction or not, or is really interesting or not, in proportion as, from the one or the other of these causes, the spirit and policy of the people of which it treats are *concentratively* displayed. This is not a hypothesis, but a fact, which any one has the power to verify, by observing that the history of no country is deemed of much interest, or is by any means an object of popular study, to which this rule does not apply; and that the real interest we take in the history of a country begins or ceases with the production or discontinuance of this concentrative effect. Without this, history is but a continued tale of wrong and outrage; or but a succession of biographies of "great" men, which offer individual, not national, portraits; and although these may be interesting as individual portraitures, they do really, by occupying the field of view, exclude from notice those national developments which are the verities of history, and which give to the history of a nation all those characteristic distinctions by which its real interest is constituted.

Seeing, then, that the importance and interest of a history is not to be estimated by the physical extent of the country, or by the numbers of the people to which it refers, it seems to us that nothing can be more unphilosophical than the cavils of those so-called "philosophers" who have been wont to sneer at the importance which has been assigned to so narrow a territory as Palestine, and to so small a people as the Hebrew nation. And equally have those been mistaken, who have sought to meet these objections by magnifying the extent of the Hebrew dominion, and the numbers of the Hebrew people.

These observations concede the supposition that the accounts of Palestine must be estimated by the same rules as other histories, but this is not the fact. In so far as it includes the history of the Hebrew people, it is the most peculiar of histories;—it is a history of the intercourse between heaven and earth during a long series of ages;—it is the history of that religion which was the destined precursor of the Christian system;—it is the history of one great act through the successive stages of its progress and development,—God himself being the Author of that act, the Jews the agents of its operation, and Palestine the country selected for its exhibition. Besides, this history has what no other history ever could possess,—a visible design and object from beginning to end. One marked portion of this design has been accomplished, and with its accomplishment the House of

Israel ceased to be a nation; the other portion is now fulfilling, and the great result, now shadowed forth in dark prophecies, remains a subject for future histories.

Thus, in every way, the history of Palestine, in all that it comprehends, is really the most generally important while it is the most peculiar of histories. And if it had been possible that the circumstances which it embraces should have taken place in some small valley among the mountains, never inhabited by more than a hundred people, the history of that valley and that people would be the most important that was ever written.

Palestine itself necessarily thus becomes of great interest, from its connection with these circumstances, from the associations which result from this connection, and from the various lore which has been brought to bear on all its characteristics. The country which God specially set apart for his great designs, and which, in consequence, contains no spot of ground on which some commissioned angel has not trod, or which does not suggest some incident in the histories of patriarchs, prophets, apostles, priests, and kings, whose names supply the familiar links by which our minds measure old times; this country must needs excite a peculiar interest in us, scarcely inferior to that with which our own native land is regarded.

But even considered in itself, Palestine is a country, small though it be, well worthy of attention, and in some respects as peculiar as the people whose history is inseparably connected with it. It does not, like most other small countries, constantly remind you that it is naturally but part of a larger country, from which it is only conventionally separated; but it is *a complete country*—a compact, distinct, and well-proportioned territory. It offers, as it were, an epitome of all the physical features by which different countries are distinguished, and which very few possess in combination. It has its lofty mountains, its stern rocky wildernesses, and its smiling hills; it has its pleasant valleys, its wide plains, and elevated plateaus; and while on the one hand it presents an extended sea-coast, with its harbours, beaches, cliffs, and promontories, on the other the solitary deserts extend their inhospitable wastes of sand. The principal river of this country, and the smaller streams, the large inland lakes—one of them so remarkable in its characteristics,—the hot springs, and the various volcanic indications, complete the singularly varied natural attributes of this "glory of all lands."

While these remarks are applicable to our general subject, they may not unsuitably introduce that division of it to which they are prefixed—the Geography of Palestine.

To form a clear idea of the geographical plan of Palestine we must extend our view considerably beyond and around it. Northward, that view must take in Cœle-Syria and the region of Lebanon; eastward, it must embrace the plains and mountains of the Haouran, and the lands of Moab and Ammon; and southward, it must overlook the inheritance of Edom and the wilderness of Paran, and must penetrate even into the peninsula of Sinai. And this extension of the survey, while it is geographically necessary, is also historically convenient; for the regions thus indicated have not only a kind of secondary importance throughout the history, but were all, for a season, subject to the Hebrew sceptre.

Thus, while there are many questions even in this Geographical survey which would require us to confine our view to the narrow bounds of Palestine, there are others which will allow us to commence our survey where—

> "Hoar Lebanon, majestic to the winds,
> Chief of a hundred hills, his summit rears,
> Unshrouded—"

and permit it to include, as we continue our progress,—

> "By Jordan south,
> Whate'er the desert's yellow arms embrace;
> Rich Gilead, Idumea's palmy plain,
> And Judah's olive hills; thence onward those
> Cliff-guarded eyries, desert bound, whose height
> Mock'd the proud eagles of rapacious Rome,
> The fam'd Petræan citadels; till last
> Rise the lone peaks, by Heav'n's own glory crown'd,
> Sinai on Horeb piled."*

Palestine is so involved among the southward continuations of Lebanon, as to take the character of a mountainous country, affording, however, some considerable plains, and numerous valleys, the principal of which will hereafter demand our separate attention. This fact brings us at once to the application of the considerations which we have just stated, and compels us to follow the track of survey which has been indicated: for any one who glances at the map will at once see that the mountains of Palestine form but a section of a great system of mountains, which commences on the north long before we reach the Promised Land, and which is prolonged to the south long after we have left it. And if, in scientific strictness, this enlarged view were not necessary to a geographical notice of Palestine, yet the renown of the mountains of Horeb, Seir, and Lebanon, and the interest connected with them in every history of the Jewish people, would still render most desirable their inclusion in this part of our work.

That the mountain framework of Syria is such as to authorise the view we have taken is shown by Volney, in a passage which will very suitably introduce the description we are to furnish:—

"If we examine a map of Syria, we may observe that this country is in some measure only a chain of mountains, which distribute themselves in various directions from one leading branch; and such in fact is the appearance it presents, whether we approach it from the side of the sea, or by the immense plains of the desert. We first discover, at a great distance, a clouded ridge which runs north and south as far as the sight extends; and, as we advance, distinguish the summits of mountains, which, sometimes detached and sometimes united in chains, uniformly terminate in one principal line which overtops them all: we may follow this line without interruption from its entry by the north quite into Arabia. It first runs close to the sea, between Alexandretta and the Orontes, and, after opening a passage to that river, continues its course to the southward, quitting for a short distance the shore, and in a chain of continued summits stretches as far as the sources of the Jordan, where it separates into two branches, to enclose as it were in a basin this river and its three lakes. In its course it detaches from this line, as from a main trunk, an infinity of ramifications, some of which lose themselves in the desert, where they form various enclosed hollows, such as those of Damascus, and Haouran, while others advance towards the sea, where they frequently end in steep declivities, such as Carmel, Nakoura, Cape Blanco, and in almost the whole country between Beirout and Tripoli of Syria; but in general they gently terminate in plains, such as those of Antioch, Tripoli, Tyre, and Acre."

It appears to us that Volney considers this principal Syrian chain, which he so correctly describes, as a branch from the great chain of Taurus, which we have ourselves been accustomed to regard as the root of all the mountains which fill the south west of Asia. Malte Brun, however, is of a different opinion; and as we do not like to disagree with him without absolute necessity, and as, moreover, we are bent on avoiding questions of merely theoretical geography, we shall be content to repeat his statement, only observing that we see no reason why a break, made by even the wide valley of a river, should necessarily be considered to destroy all connection between the opposite mountains. Malte Brun's observation is,—"The mountains are not at all ramifications of Mount Taurus. Mount Rossus, a prolongation of Amanus, terminates a the valley of the Orontes. But the proper Syrian chain begins on the south of Antioch, by the huge peak of Mount Cassius, which shoots up to the heavens its needle-like point, encircled with forests."

The continuation of these mountains southward gives occasion to remark, that, as Volney states, the main chain separates near the sources of the Jordan into two branches, to enclose, as in a basin, that river and its lakes. These two branches, with their numerous ramifications, constitute the mountains of Palestine on both sides of the Jordan. The country to the south of the Dead Sea was too little known in the time of Volney to enable him to trace the continuation and termination of these two ranges beyond the southern extremity of the Dead Sea. His map makes the western range approach nearer to the eastern at this point; and it then continues to proceed in this closer proximity, parallel with it, southward, for about forty miles, when it suddenly strikes westward, joining the eastern range, and shutting up, as in a *cul de sac*, the valley which they had hitherto enclosed between them. But, in reality, the valley remains open, and the two ranges continue to run parallel to each other unto the Gulf of Akabah, where they separate, the one taking the eastern coast of that gulf, and opposing its terminating promontories to the Red Sea at the point where that gulf opens. The other takes the western side of the same gulf, entering the peninsula of Sinai, which divides this gulf from that of Suez. Here it may be considered to terminate, most grandly, near the point of the peninsula, in those renowned mountains at whose foot the shepherd Moses was feeding his flock when the Most High called him to lead forth the Hebrew nation from their bondage in Egypt; and from whose highest top He afterwards made known his law to the same people.

* 'Lebanon.' A Poem.

Thus, in an enlarged point of view, the mountains of Anti-Lebanon, dividing in the north of Palestine, send forth two southward branches, which between them enclose not only the basin of the Jordan and Dead Sea, but that of the broad valley which extends from that sea to the Ælanitic Gulf, and of the gulf itself,—the whole extent being not less than 340 geographical miles.

This view, in its natural connections, of the mountain system of Palestine, from its root in Lebanon to its termination at the opening of the Gulf of Akabah, will tend much to simplify our further task by supplying a combination for those conspicuous parts which must now, severally, engage our attention, that we may observe more closely the natural character of those mountains, the forms they bear, and the ornament with which they are invested.

The mountains of Syria, as they vary their levels and situations, are also greatly changed in their form and appearance. In the northern portion, between Scanderoon and the valley of the Orontes, the firs, larches, oaks, box-trees, laurels, yews, and myrtles with which they abound, give them an air of liveliness with which the traveller is delighted. On some declivities he even meets with cottages environed with fig-trees and vineyards, and the sight of these repays the fatigues he has endured on a road which, by rugged paths, leads him from the bottoms of valleys to the tops of hills, and from the tops of hills to the bottoms of valleys. The inferior branches which extend to the northward of Aleppo, on the contrary, present nothing but bare rocks, without earth or verdure.

That part of the range of mountains which extends through two degrees of latitude, from Mount Cassius southward to Lebanon, offers, on its seaward slopes, a soil and situation suitable for the growth of vines, olives, and tobacco; but on the eastern side—that of the desert—the summits and declivities of this chain present the aspect of almost one continued series of white and barren rocks.

About the parallel of Tripoli (lat. 34° 28′ N.) we come to the commencement of two parallel ranges, which extend through about one degree of latitude. They form at their termination the natural frontier of Palestine, and enclose between them a fertile valley, which has the average breadth of fifteen miles. These are the mountains of Lebanon; and the valley which lies between them is the Hollow Syria (Cœle-Syria) of the ancients; but by the present inhabitants is called, pre-eminently, El Bekka, or the valley. The westernmost of these ranges gradually inclines towards the sea and terminates at the mouth of the Leontes, near the renowned city of Tyre; while the more inland range is that which, as already described, divides near the sources of the Jordan, to enclose on the west and east the prolonged basin which contains the Jordan and its lakes, and the valley and gulf of Akabah. The denomination of "Lebanon" is applied in Scripture, and by the ancient Orientals, to both, or indifferently to either, of the parallel ranges which enclose the long valley of Cœle-Syria; but the Syrian Greeks gave the name of Anti-Libanus to the easternmost range, which overlooks the plains of Damascus. This name, although affording a distinction which is useful in precise description, has been so arbitrarily employed by some of the old historians as to occasion some confusion, the rectification of which has involved much unprofitable discussion, into which we need not enter.

The present natives of the country have found the convenience of distinguishing the two ranges by different names; Anti-Libanus they call the eastern mountain (Jebel es-Sharki), in opposition to Libanus, which they call the western (Jebel el Gharbi), but to which they also assign the ancient name in the form of Jebel Libnan.

The mountains of Lebanon are by far the highest of the whole range. The highest ridge of the western Lebanon is marked on both sides by a line, drawn at the distance of two hours' journey from the summit, above which all is barren; but the slopes and valleys below this mark afford pasturage and are capable of cultivation, by virtue of the numerous springs which are met with in all directions. Cultivation is, however, chiefly found on the seaward slopes, where numerous villages flourish, and where every inch of ground is turned to account by the industrious natives, who, in the absence of natural levels, build terraces to level the ground, and to prevent the earth from being swept down by the winter rains, and at the same time to retain the water requisite for the irrigation of their crops. Here, amid the crags of the rocks, are also to be seen the supposed remains of the renowned cedars, but a much greater number of firs, oaks, brambles, mulberry-trees, figs, and vines.

The general elevation of Anti-Libanus is inferior to that of the western range; but about its southward termination, where it divides to send its branches east and west of the Jordan, the ridge rises loftily and overtops all the other summits of Lebanon. This highest mountain of the region bears the distinct name of Jebel es-Sheikh, and is, unquestionably, the Mount Hermon, the perpetual snow of whose far-seen summit is more than once alluded to by the sacred writers. (¹) Our information concerning Anti-Libanus generally is less complete than that which we possess respecting the parallel range. We know, however, that it has fewer inhabitants, and is scarcely anywhere cultivated. Indeed, it is not equally cultivable; for it would appear, from a comparison of the dispersed notices in Burckhardt, that its western declivities towards the great valley of Baalbec (Cœle-Syria) are completely barren, without trees or pasture; but on the summits and on the eastern side, facing the plains of Damascus, there appear at least to be parts affording good pasturage, and abounding also in stunted oak-trees, of which few are higher than from twelve to fifteen feet. The common route across these mountains, from Baalbec to Damascus, at one time ascends into the region of snow (in March); at another, follows the direction of the mountain torrents, between parallel lines of hills, by the side of aspens, of oaks, and of numerous willows by the water-courses.

Leaving now the mountains of Lebanon, and following the branch which passes into Palestine, we observe that the mountains become less high and rugged, and more fit for tillage. They rise again to the south-east of Mount Carmel, are covered with woods, and afford most pleasant prospects; but as we advance towards Judea, they lose their verdure, the valleys grow narrower, they become dry and stony, and form at the Dead Sea a pile of desolate rocks, full of caverns and precipices.

There appears to be considerable general resemblance in the *progressive* characteristics of the mountain chains of both the east and west, as far as the southern extremity of the Asphaltic Lake, if not farther. But as we shall, in another part of this chapter, consider, somewhat at large, the mountains of the eastern country, we will not dwell on this matter at present.

The preceding view has been too rapid to include those descriptive details which are of the most interest to the general reader, or to notice those particular eminences which claim consideration, either from their prominent importance among the physical characteristics of the country, or from their connection with some of the events which the history of Palestine records. Commencing, therefore, again with Lebanon, we shall proceed from thence southward, noticing the principal mountains which occur, first on the west, and then on the east of the Jordan.

We are glad that this arrangement enables us to introduce Volney's correct and animated description of Lebanon, which we now give in his own words:—

"Lebanon, which gives its name to the whole extensive chain of the Kesraoun and the country of the Druses, presents us everywhere with majestic mountains. At every step we meet with scenes in which nature displays either beauty or grandeur. When we land on the coast, the loftiness and steep ascent of this mountainous ridge, which seems to enclose the country, those gigantic masses which shoot into the clouds, inspire astonishment and awe. Should the anxious traveller then climb those summits which bounded his view, the wide-extended space which he discovers becomes a fresh subject of admiration. But completely to enjoy this majestic scene, he must ascend to the very point of Lebanon, or the *Sannin*. There, on every side, he will view an horizon without bounds; while in clear weather the sight is lost over the desert which extends to the Persian Gulf, and over the sea which bathes the coasts of Europe. He seems to command the whole world, while the wandering eye, now surveying the successive chains of mountains, transports the imagination in an instant from Antioch to Jerusalem; and now approaching the surrounding objects, observes the distant profundity of the coast, till the attention, at length fixed by distincter objects, more minutely examines the rocks, woods, torrents, hill-sides, villages and towns; and the mind secretly exults at the diminution of things which formerly appeared so great. He contemplates the valley, obscured by stormy clouds, with a novel delight, and smiles at hearing the thunder, which had so often burst over his head, growling beneath his feet; while the threatening summits of the mountain are diminished till they appear like the furrows of a ploughed field or the steps of an amphitheatre: and he feels himself flattered by an elevation above so many great objects, on which pride makes him look down with a secret satisfaction.

"When the traveller visits the interior parts of these mountains, the ruggedness of the roads, the steepness of the descents, the height of the precipices, strike him at first with terror; but the sagacity of his mule soon relieves him, and he examines at leisure those

picturesque scenes which succeed each other to entertain him. There, as in the Alps, he travels whole days to such a place that was in sight at his departure: he winds, he descends, he skirts the hills, he climbs; and in this perpetual change of position it seems as if some magic power varied for him at every step the decorations of the scenery. Sometimes he sees villages as if ready to glide from the steep declivities on which they are built, and so disposed, that the terraced roofs of one row of houses serve as a street to the row above them. Sometimes he sees a convent standing on a solitary eminence, like Mar Shaya, in the valley of the Tigris. Here is a rock perforated by a torrent, and becoming a natural arch, like that of Nahr el Leben.* There another rock, worn perpendicular, resembles a lofty wall. Frequently on the sides of hills he sees beds of stones stripped and detached by the waters, rising up like artificial ruins. In many places, the waters, meeting with inclined beds, have undermined the intermediate earth, and formed caverns, as at Nahr el Kelb, near Antoura: in others are formed subterraneous channels, through which flow rivulets for a part of the year, as at Mar Elias el Roum and Mar Hanna; † but these picturesque situations sometimes become tragical. From thaws and earthquakes, rocks have been known to lose their equilibrium, roll down upon the adjacent houses, and bury the inhabitants: such an accident happened about twenty years ago, ‡ it overwhelmed a whole village near Mar-Djordjos, without leaving a single trace to discover where it formerly stood. Still more lately, and near the same spot, a whole hill-side, covered with mulberry-trees and vines, was detached by a sudden thaw, and sliding down the declivity of the rock, was launched altogether, like a ship from the stocks, into the valley. Hence arose a whimsical but reasonable litigation, between the proprietor of the original ground and the owner of the emigrated land; the cause was brought before the emir Yousef, who indemnified both parties for their mutual losses. It might be expected that such accidents would disgust the inhabitants of those mountains; but besides that they are rare, they are compensated by an advantage which makes them prefer their habitations to the most fertile plains: I mean, the security they enjoy from the oppressions of the Turks. This security is esteemed so valuable a blessing by the inhabitants, that they have displayed an industry on those rocks which we may elsewhere look for in vain. By dint of art and labour they have compelled a rocky soil to become fertile. Sometimes, to profit by the water, they conduct it by a thousand windings along the declivities, or stop it by forming dams in the valleys; while in other places they prop up ground, ready to crumble away, by walls and terraces. Almost all these mountains, thus laboured, present the appearance of a flight of stairs, each step of which is a row of vines or mulberry-trees. I have reckoned from one hundred to one hundred and twenty of these gradations in the same declivity, from the bottom of the valley to the top of the eminence."

In Volney's time, if the traveller, progressing southward, sought on the northern shores of the Lake of Gennesareth for the ruins of Capernaum, that city "once exalted unto heaven," but now utterly "cast down," and paused in his search to survey the mountains by which the lake was enclosed, he observed, to the north of him, hill rising above hill in beauteous succession, the loftiest visible eminence being crowned by a castellated city, whose commanding situation was, perhaps, unrivalled in the world. If this strange prospect tempted his feet to the ascent, he was surprised to find the task less arduous than he had anticipated. Gradually one mountain after another was left below; at last he arrived at a pyramidal hill which overtopped them all, and on the extreme summit of which the city stood. This city bore the name of Safed, and was thought to represent the Bethulia of which so much mention is made in the Book of Judith; and it was also supposed to be that city to which Jesus Christ, when preaching in this neighbourhood his famous Sermon on the Mount, directed attention, by observing, that "a city set on a hill cannot be hid."(²) Of this city, only ruins now remain; it was destroyed by an earthquake on the 1st of Jan., 1837.

Mount Tabor is the highest mountain in Lower Galilee, and one of the most striking in the Holy Land. It stands at the north-east of the great plain of Esdraelon; and although surrounded by chains of mountains on nearly all sides, it is the only one that stands entirely aloof from its neighbours, although it appears to us questionable whether it may not itself be regarded as the bold termination of a branch thrown out by the chain which encloses on the west the Lake of Tiberias. There is such a branch, and the connection between it and this mountain appears to be very close.

The figure of Mount Tabor as seen from the south-west approaches that of a semisphere, and offers a very regular appearance; but as viewed from the west-north-west, its form inclines more to that of a truncated cone. Its ground figure is usually described as round, and, indeed, seems to be perfectly so to those coming from the midst of the great plain or from the Sea of Galilee; but it is really somewhat more long (from east to west) than broad, so that its true figure inclines to oval. This is most clearly seen when the mountain is viewed from the hills of Nazareth. Mr. Elliot and Dr. Robinson estimate the height of Tabor at 1000 feet; but the barometrical measurements of Shubert give for the elevation above the sea 1748 Paris feet; elevation of the plain at the base 438 feet; leaving 1310 Paris feet for the height above the plain. It takes three hours to travel round the base of the mountain; an hour is generally required to reach the summit by a circuitous path, but the ascent may be accomplished in three-quarters of an hour, or even half an hour by a forced exertion; and the plain upon the top of the mountain is almost half an hour in circuit.

The mountain is inaccessible except on the north, where the ascent offers so little difficulty that there are few parts which suggest to the traveller the prudence or necessity of dismounting from his horse. This remarkable mountain offers so rare a combination of the bold and beautiful, that pilgrims of all ages have expatiated upon its glories with untiring wonder and delight. The trees of various species,* and the bushes always green, with which it is invested, and the small groves with which it is crowned, contribute no less than its figure to its perfect beauty. Leopards, wild boars, gazelles, and hares, are among the animals which find shelter in its more wooded parts: while the trees are tenanted by "birds of every wing," whose warblings and motions beguile the fatigue of the ascent. "The path," says a late traveller, "wound around the mountain, and gave us a view from all its different sides, every step presenting something new, and more and more beautiful, until all was completely forgotten and lost in the exceeding loveliness of the view from the summit. Stripped of every association, and considered merely as an elevation commanding a view of unknown valleys and mountains, I never saw a mountain which, for beauty of scene, better repaid the toil of ascending it."

The objects which are embraced by "the view from the top," thus admiringly alluded to by Mr. Stephens, have been carefully enumerated by the Rev. C. B. Elliot in a passage which we here introduce, as calculated to give a very useful idea of the relative bearing of different mountains seen from this great central point. "The view it commands," he says, "is magnificent. To the north, in successive ranges, are the mountains of Galilee, backed by the mighty Lebanon; and Safet, as always, stands out in prominent relief. To the north-east is the Mount of Beatitudes, with its peculiar outline and interesting associations; behind which rise Great Hermon and the whole chain of Anti-Lebanon. To the east are the hills of the Haouran, and the country of the Gadarenes, below which the eye catches a glimpse of the Lake of Tiberias, while to the south-east it crosses the valley of the Jordan, and rests on the high land of Bashan. Due south rise the mountains of Gilboa, and behind them those of Samaria, stretching far to the west. On the south-south-west the villages of Endor and Nain are seen on the Little Hermon. Mount Carmel and the Bay of Acre appear on the north-west [west by north?]; and towards them flows, through the fertile plains of Esdraelon, 'that great river, the river Kishon,' now dwindled into a little stream. Each feature in this prospect is beautiful: the eye and mind are delighted; and, by a combination of objects and associations unusual to fallen man, earthly scenes, which more than satisfy the external sense, elevate the soul to heavenly contemplations."

The beautiful upper plain is enclosed by a wall—probably the same which was built by Josephus when governor of Galilee,—and contains some ruins, supposed to be those of the two monasteries which, according to William of Tyre, were built here by Godfrey of Bouillon, in the place of others of earlier date which the Moslems had destroyed. The plain has at different times been under cultivation; but when, from oppression or fear, abandoned by the cultivator, it becomes a table of rich grass and wild flowers, which send forth a most refreshing and luxurious odour. In summer the dews fall copiously on Tabor, and a strong wind blows over it all day. Thick clouds rest upon its head every morning, and do not disappear till noon.

The mountain is the scene of some historical circumstances, which

* Or "River of Milk." It falls into the Nahr el Salib, called also the River of Beirout; this arch is upwards of one hundred and sixty feet long, eighty-five wide, and near two hundred high above the torrent.

† "These subterraneous rivulets are common throughout Syria. There are some at Damascus, at the sources of the Orontes, and at those of the Jordan."

‡ Volney published his Travels in 1787.

* Burckhardt says chiefly oak and wild pistachios. 'Syria,' p. 334.

are recorded in other portions of this work; but its chief interest to the Christian pilgrim arises from the very old tradition which points it out as the place where Christ appeared in glory with Moses and Elias.

Beyond Mount Tabor, five miles to the south-south-west, a range of hills extends for several miles from east to west. This range is of no considerable elevation, and is fertile and proper for pasturage. At its foot there are some natural caves, formerly used for sepulchres, but in which the Arabs now stable their horses. The range claims to be noticed, as it is commonly regarded as the "Mount Hermon" which the Psalmist celebrates for its pastures and abundant dews. It is therefore called the Little Hermon, to distinguish it from that snow-capped range of Anti-Lebanon, to which also the name of Hermon has been applied.

In the same quarter, to the south and south-east of Tabor, another range of hills, separated in one part from the Little Hermon by a valley six miles broad, advances to the borders of the Jordan near Bysan, the ancient Bethshan or Scythopolis; and for some miles northward from thence, continues to bound on the west the valley of the river. This group of hills rises to the height of 800 feet above the level of the road, and is, perhaps, 1000 feet above the level of the Jordan. This lengthened ridge rises up in peaks, and bears a little withered grass and a few scanty shrubs scattered about in different places. In this sterile and arid character these hills are remarkably distinguished from those of the lesser Hermon, and indeed from all other mountains in this neighbourhood, which are in most parts covered with trees and copses, herbs, flowers, and grass. This range is the Mount Gilboa of Scripture, and here a village bearing the name of Jelbon was pointed out to Dr. Robinson, and its peculiarly desolate character was ascribed by most of the old travellers to the poetical imprecation of David upon the mountains where "the shield of the mighty was vilely cast away," in the words "Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings." (2 Sam. i. 21.) But this is, perhaps, assigning too literal a sense to the denunciations of the royal poet, since it is admitted that ample dews and heavy rains have been experienced by travellers upon these very mountains.

On the maritime shore, nearly west of Tabor, occurs the only very prominent headland which the general low and even coast of Palestine offers. This headland forms the seaward termination of a mountain range to which, and more particularly to the promontory itself, belongs the name of Carmel—so renowned in the Hebrew annals, and in the history of the Crusades. This promontory encloses on the south the bay of Acre; and its ridge then retires from the coast, south-eastward, to join the central chain, which we have described as prolonged from Lebanon. Regarded in the reverse direction, it is a branch of this chain, the promontory being then its termination. This connection may very clearly be traced; but attention being restricted to the part more immediately connected with the promontory, and partaking in its sensible characteristics, it extends about seven leagues. Its elevation, even in the highest part, where it fronts the sea, is comparatively moderate;* but it commands very extensive views, and its general beauty has been mentioned with intense admiration from the time of Solomon (Cant. vii. 5) till now. In front the view extends to the distant horizon, over the dark-blue waters of the Mediterranean; behind stretches the great plain of Esdraelon, and the mountains of the Jordan and Judea; below, on the right hand, lies the city of Acre, diminished to a mere speck; while, in the far distance beyond, the eye rests on the summits of Lebanon; and, turning to track the coast on the left hand, takes in the ruins of Cæsarea—the city of Herod and the Roman governors of Palestine.

The interior of Galilee and Samaria is often obscured by fogs; but the heights of Carmel enjoy a pure and enlivening atmosphere, calculated to render mere existence a delight. The continual verdure which covers the mountain scarcely allows the whiteness of its calcareous rocks to appear. The pine, oak, olive, laurel, and many other trees grow (but not to any considerable size) above a beautiful carpet of grass and wild flowers; and this rich covering of grass and flowers extends to the fine prairies around, by virtue of the numerous streams which come to them from the mountain. The forests and woods of Carmel offer a verdure which passes not away at any season; from the number of the shrubs and plants which in their turns succeed each other. To these woods numerous wild animals resort; and birds, still more numerous, attracted by the abundance of suitable food, and by the streams which wind through the valleys of Carmel, enliven, by the harmony of their varied songs, one of the most beautiful spots which this very beautiful world affords. (*)

* The only estimate which we have seen makes it 1500 feet, which, from a comparison of circumstances, seems a considerable exaggeration.

At that time, when those mountains of the Holy Land, with which any Scriptural incidents could be connected, were crowded with persons who deemed it meritorious to withdraw from the turmoil of the world, the caves of this mountain were occupied by thousands of such persons, and its sides were covered with the chapels in which they worshipped, and the gardens which they cultivated. The grottos still exist; many ruins of the ecclesiastical erections of this time are dispersed upon the mountain; and some of its products seem to offer evidence of the cultivation to which it was then subject; but now, after many ages, it may be supposed to have reverted to somewhat of that more natural condition in which it probably appeared when the Hebrew poets and prophets celebrated the "excellency of Carmel."

Crossing the plain of Esdraelon, we leave Galilee, and arrive among the beautifully-wooded hills of Samaria, which exhibit scenery very different from that of the mountains of Galilee. Among numerous venerable olive woods, towns and villages are scattered in every direction, and some of the views rival those of Switzerland.

The singularity and historical importance of the twin mountains of Ebal and Gerizim, in Samaria, entitle them to notice. Schubert's barometrical observations make the summit of Gerizim 2500 Paris feet above the sea: but the valley below is 1751 Paris feet above the sea level; and this leaves 750 feet for the height of the mountain above the valley. The two mountains are separated only by a narrow valley, and they exhibit a remarkable analogy of size, figure, and height. It was perhaps from this reason, as well as from their convenient proximity, with a valley intervening, that, on taking possession of the Promised Land, it was ordered that assembled Israel should hear and respond to the curses of the law, declared from Mount Ebal, and to its blessings from Mount Gerizim. The blessings and the curses may seem to have remained upon these mountains; for, while Gerizim is fertile and of pleasant aspect, Ebal is utterly barren. This superiority of Gerizim may be owing, not only to its having a northern aspect on the side towards the valley, so that it is less than Ebal scorched by the hot suns of summer, but to its slope of ascent being less abrupt, so that the soil is more liable to accumulate on its surface, and less subject to be washed down by the autumnal rains. Gerizim was deemed by the Samaritans the holiest of mountains; and upon it they had their temple, in which, rather than in that of Jerusalem, they held that men ought to worship. The temple exists no longer; but a remnant of the people and of their worship still lingers in the valley below, where is still the city called Shechem in the Old Testament, and Sychar in the New, and whose classical name of Neapolis is now exhibited in the modern one of Nablous.

The valley which divides the mountains, and in which the thousands of Israel were congregated, is more than a league in length, but only from 200 to 300 paces broad. This valley, shaded with groves of figs, olives, almonds, and apricots, bounded by high mountains, and with a clear and beautiful stream winding and murmuring through its centre, is one of the most beautiful in Palestine.*

Judea, the southern part of Palestine, is a country full of hills and valleys, conformably to the Scriptural intimations. The hills are generally separated from one another by valleys and torrents, and are for the most part of moderate height, uneven, and seldom of any regular figure. The rock of which they are composed is easily converted into soil, which being arrested by terraces, when washed down by the rains, renders the hills cultivable in a series of long, narrow gardens, formed by these terraces, from the base upwards. Thus the hills were cultivated in former times most abundantly, and were enriched and beautified with the olive, the fig-tree, and the vine; and thus the limited cultivation which now subsists is still carried on. But when the inhabitants were rooted out, and cultivation abandoned, the terraces fell to decay, and the soil which had collected on them was washed down into the valleys, leaving only the arid rock, naked and desolate. This is the general character; but in some parts the hills are beautifully wooded, and in others the application of the ancient mode of cultivation—under which the valleys are covered with corn, while the terraced hills are clothed with fig-trees, olive-trees, or vines—suggests to the traveller how rich this country once was, and still might be, and how beautiful was the aspect which it offered.

All these characteristics of desolation apply with peculiar force

* Stephens (an American traveller) says, that, till he came here from the south, he had thought that he would not give the estate of a wealthy gentleman in Genessee for the whole kingdom of David.

to that portion of Judea* which formed the inheritance of Benjamin. Its most favourably-situated mountains are wholly uncultivated; and, perhaps, in no other country is such a mass of rock exhibited without an atom of soil. In the eastward, towards the termination of the Jordan and the head of the Dead Sea, this district takes a naturally stern and grand character, such as no other part of Palestine offers; and higher mountains occur than in any other part of the southern country.

Here the road from Jerusalem to the plain of Jericho, after a few miles, leads to and traverses the sternest and most desolate mountain wilderness in all Palestine. The ridge of mountains in this singular district which immediately faces the plain, forming part of the mountains which enclose the valley of the Jordan, is the highest in Judea. They bear the name of Quarantania, from an ancient opinion that the wilderness which they form was that in which Christ remained for forty days fasting, after he had been baptized in the river Jordan; and that the highest summit of the ridge is that "exceeding high mountain" from which the devil showed him "all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them." (Matt. iv. 8.) Speaking of this wild region, Morison says, "I am persuaded that there are very few deserts in the world so frightful as this; and I am compelled to acknowledge that, melancholy as are the vast solitudes of Arabia Petræa, which I traversed in my journey from Egypt to Sinai, they are altogether pleasant in comparison to this." Maundrell bears similar testimony, calling it "A most miserable, dry, and barren place, consisting of high rocky mountains, so torn and disordered, as if the earth had suffered some great convulsion, in which its very bowels had been turned outward."

Of the Mountain of Temptation† the ascent is so difficult and perilous, that many travellers of no ordinary enterprise have desisted from the attempt to reach its summit. Of this number was Hasselquist, who describes the mountain as "high and pointed; and on our left as we ascended, towards which the rock was perpendicularly steep, it consists of a loose, white limestone, mixed with another that is greyish and harder. The way up to its highest point is dangerous beyond imagination. It is narrow, steep, full of rocks and stones, which obliged us frequently to creep over them before we could accomplish our design. The difficulty is increased by the valley on one side; which, besides its terrible aspect, is most dangerous, as, in case any one should slip, his death would be certain. I went as far upon this terrible mountain as prudence would permit, but ventured not to proceed to the summit." We suppose he went up two-thirds of the mountain, the ascent of which is attended with more fatigue than danger; but the remaining third is so formidable, that few even of the old pilgrims, though actuated by the fervour of religious zeal, ventured to the summit; and those who did, described it as the most perilous undertaking of their lives. The view from the top, however, well repays the fatigue and danger of the enterprise: it embraces the whole extent of the Dead Sea, and beyond it the plains of Moab, and Mount Pisgah, whence Moses viewed the Promised Land; while just under the eye are the plains of Jericho and the river Jordan. This mountain, like the others of the same ridge, is full of caves, of various form and size, which have alternately offered secure retreats to fugitives, recluses, and robbers. Such caves are, indeed, most numerous among the steep and rugged mountains at the northern extremity of the Dead Sea on this side the Jordan; which, except in being of much less elevation, offer the same essential characteristics as the mountains of Quarantania.

Of Judea Proper, the most mountainous part is the country around Jerusalem, and between it and the head of the Asphaltic Lake. More to the south, the *breadth* of the country is less occupied by mountains, which are confined chiefly to the central ridge: its dependent hills and its disparted branches, which are sent forth to divide and diversify the plains,—which extend, on the one hand, to the shores of the Mediterranean, and, on the other, to the barren and high rocks which thickly set the western shore of the Dead Sea,—are of such essential form and character as we have already described. The naked hills prevail most in the north and south of Judea, and occur frequently in other parts. Cultivation on the hills is most common for about half the distance from Jerusalem to Hebron, southward; and, in the other half, the uncultivated hills are more or less wooded. The only mountain in this region which is seen from far, and seems to require particular notice, is that one, nearly detached, which rises about five miles to the south-east of Bethlehem. It is called the "Franks' Mount," from its having been fortified and held by the Christians many years against the Moslems during the Crusades. The summit still exhibits some ruins of the strong castles which they built there. The situation would seem almost impregnable, for the mountain is very high and rugged, and so steep that Nau, the only traveller by whom we can find it to have been ascended, was obliged to dismount at its base, and climb on foot to the top.

None of the other mountains of Palestine Proper are, separately, of such physical or historical importance as to require notice in this part of the present work. But its historical portion will be found to characterize, as occasion requires, most of the hills and hilly districts of the country.

We must now proceed to view the more remarkable mountains in the country beyond the Jordan. For this our materials are still very inadequate. But this will be the less sensibly felt, as few of the mountains of this part of the country are of such Scriptural or historical renown as to create the consciousness of need for that information which, if felt to be wanted, could not be very perfectly supplied.

Jebel es-Sheikh, which forms the natural northern frontier of Palestine beyond Jordan, has already been noticed. This mount sends a branch or continuation southward, which, under the name of Jebel Heish, extends about twenty-five miles, terminating in the Tel Faras, at a distance of about ten miles eastward from a point somewhat below the head of the Lake of Gennesareth. The ground traversed by this chain is much elevated above the eastward plains of Damascus and Djolan; so that, seen from thence, it appears to be composed of considerable mountains; but when the traveller, having gradually ascended from the plains, comes near to them, they appear to be of very moderate elevation.

For twenty-two miles (eight hours), to the south of the termination of the Jebel Heish, is an open country, equally divided by the river Jarmouk. This open country contains the famous pasture lands of Argob and part of Bashan. Eastward, this land slopes to the plains of the Haouran, and westward it is interrupted by the steep descents to the Lake of Gennesareth and the valley of the Jordan. And here it may be proper to observe, that the general level of the plain country beyond the Jordan is high above the valley of that river, which offers one of the lowest levels in all Syria(4). This large space of open country may be called flat in comparison with the hilly region to the south; and viewed from a distance, appears more flat than it really is; for, besides that the ground has a gradual descent towards the eastern plains, it is intersected by numerous deep valleys, rich in pastures.

Beyond this district the mountains rise again, and increase in altitude and breadth as they traverse, or rather fill, the country of Gilead to and beyond the river Jabbok. In this part the mountains are in higher and broader masses than anywhere else on this side the Jordan; and here, as we have hitherto done, we shall notice the more prominent points, without attempting to discriminate the various ridges and branches which it offers.

The part of Gilead, north of the Jabbok, is comprehended in the modern districts of Belad Beni Obeid, Adjeloun and Moerad. All these are mountainous districts throughout, and are more or less wooded, particularly with the oak and wild pistachio. The wood is most abundant in Adjeloun. The mountains of Moerad are the highest and most dense. The principal points in these districts are the mountain of Kafkafa, a long and broad mountain facing the eastern plains. On the lower slopes of this calcareous mountain, wild pistachio trees abound; higher up oaks become more frequent and the forest thickens; near the top are some remains of the foundations of ancient buildings, and the summit commands an extensive and beautiful view over the neighbouring mountains and plains. The mountain of Oeraboun, which marks the limits between the districts of Adjeloun and Moerad, is chiefly remarkable for the thickest forest of oak-trees which Burckhardt had seen in Syria. The mountains of Moerad contain no points which have attracted particular attention; but it is observed that their higher summits seem to be considerably more elevated than those of the mountains of the southern side of the Jabbok (now Zerka).

To the south of this river the districts are less subdivided; for the denomination of *the Belka* seems, from Burckhardt's use of it, to embrace the whole tract of country between that river and the head of the Dead Sea. It appears that a portion of this country, immediately to the south of Zerka, must be understood as included in the Scriptural name of Gilead. For this very name, in the modified form of Jelaad, is still given to a mountain six miles to the south of that river. This mountain runs, from east to west, about

* By Judea we are to be understood as meaning, not merely the territory of the single tribe of Judah, but the kingdom of Judea as distinguished from that of Israel.

† Such is the name usually given it: but the old French travellers often also call it *Mont du Diable*.

seven miles in length; and upon it are the ruins of two towns, which also bear the names of Jelaad and Jelaoud. Closely adjoining this mountain rises that of Jebel Osha, which far overtops all the other mountains of the Belka. It is a fine mountain, well wooded, and its summit gives a very striking view over the valley of the Jordan, while Jericho is visible at a great distance to the south. The mountain takes its name from a tomb which is supposed to be that of the prophet Hosea.

South of the Zerka the chain of mountains increases its breadth. And in this inheritance of Gad and (partly of) Reuben, which the Belka forms, the traveller, from the sultry plains of the Jordan, is refreshed by the cool winds which blow over this high region: everywhere he finds the grateful shade of the oak and wild pistachio, and looks around upon a scenery more resembling that of Europe than he is likely to find in all Syria.

Before arriving at the parallel of the Dead Sea the mountainous country contracts its breadth; and about the head of the sea is reduced to the single principal chain, which afterwards enlarges to form the mountains of Seir. This chain, commencing nearly opposite the northern extremity of the Asphaltic Lake, and at its other extremity joining Mount Seir, appears to form the mountains which in Scripture bear the name of Abarim. There it is recorded that from Mount Nebo, one of the highest summits of this range, and which, from the context, must have been in its northern part, Moses was permitted to view the Promised Land; and that there he died. Writers disagree as to the situation of this mountain. Nau refers to a mountain near Szalt, evidently meaning Mount Osha, mentioned above; and we should be inclined to agree with him, if it did not seem that this mountain is more to the north than the history will allow. Six miles westward from Heshbon is the situation assigned to Mount Nebo by Eusebius, who is followed by most later writers. It is an excellent position for the *history*; but being unable to learn that the situation is occupied by any eminent mountain, we may, perhaps, with the few travellers who have visited this part of the country, look for it in Mount Attarous, which rises about eight miles to the north of the river Modjeb (the ancient Arnon). This mountain offers the highest summit of the neighbourhood. No traveller seems to have ascended it; and it is only slightly mentioned, in passing, as a tall and barren mountain, on whose summit might be perceived a heap of stones overshadowed by a wild pistachio-tree.

We have no information of any noted mountain in the country south of the Arnon. Beyond that river lie wide plains covered with absinthium and other plants and shrubs. But, on approaching Kerek,* the country becomes more mountainous; and at this point beyond the plains of Moab, where the mountains rise again, we should be inclined to fix the commencement of Mount Seir, the southward continuation of which we have already indicated. This forms here, at its commencement, a very mountainous country between Kerek and the end of the Dead Sea; nor is the breadth of mountain country thus indicated much diminished in the southward progress of the chain.

Our attention must next be directed to the mountains which now line, on the east and on the west, the broad valley of Arabah, which extends from the Asphaltic Lake to the Red Sea. The prolongations of Lebanon exhibit a very different character on the opposite sides of this valley. No traveller has so clearly indicated this difference as Dr. Robinson. Speaking first of the eastern range, which forms the proper mountains of Seir, or of Edom, he says:—

"The structure of the chain is, at the base, low hills of limestone, or argillaceous rock; then the lofty masses of porphyry constituting the body of the mountain; above these, sandstone broken up into irregular ridges and grotesque groups of cliffs; and again, farther back and higher than all, long elevated ridges of limestone without precipices. East of all these, stretches off indefinitely the high plateau of the great eastern desert. We estimated the height of the porphyry cliffs at about 2000 feet above the Arabah; the elevation of Wady Mûsa above the same is perhaps 2000 or 2200 feet; while the limestone ridges farther back probably do not fall short of 3000 feet. The whole breadth of the mountainous tract between the Arabah and the eastern desert beyond does not exceed fifteen or twenty geographical miles.

"The character of these mountains is quite different from those on the west of the Arabah. The latter, which seemed to be not more than two-thirds as high, are wholly desert and sterile, while these on the east appear to enjoy a sufficiency of rain, and are covered with tufts of herbs and occasional trees. The Wadys too are full of trees and shrubs and flowers, while the eastern and higher parts are extensively cultivated, and yield good crops. The general appearance of the soil is not unlike that around Hebron; though the face of the country is very different. It is, indeed, the region of which Isaac said to his son Esau, 'Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of heaven from above.'"

We learn from other sources that these mountains not only rise very high above the valley, but, as viewed from thence, increase in elevation in their progress to the south. But this increase is only apparent, and owing to the southward slope of the valley, as evinced by the equal level of the eastern plain beyond the mountains. As viewed from that plain, the mountains have no sensible increase of altitude southward; and from thence, indeed, they only exhibit the appearance of low hills. This is owing to the elevation of the eastern plain far above the level of the valley. This circumstance is observed, indeed, throughout the country from the Lake of Tiberias southward. From the borders of that lake, or of the Jordan, or of the Dead Sea, the traveller has to make steep and difficult ascents up a succession of tall cliffs and high mountains, on surmounting the highest of which he finds that he has to make but a comparatively slight descent into the eastern plains.

From this it will be seen that the mountains of Seir must not be regarded as a single range of hills; but as an extensive mountainous region, from ten to twelve leagues in width, forming a rocky belt, separating the stony Arabia from the eastern deserts of sand. On first viewing these mountains from the *southern* part of the valley of Arabah, high rocks of granite appear as if fractured into a thousand different forms. These rocks of granite formation* extend almost as far northward as the Wady Ghurundel,† which is almost half way between the Gulf of Akabah and Petra; they then begin to be covered with chalk and limestone, which extend five leagues to the north and north-east, and then disappear amidst rocks of sandstone veined with oxide of iron, and presenting more fantastic shapes than any other parts of the mountain. How far to the north of Petra these last characteristics extend, we find no authority that states; but we learn from Burckhardt that sandstone continues to be very common as far to the north as the Wady el Ahsa (near the southern extremity of the Dead Sea), after which it occurs but rarely.

The tallest summit among the mountains of Seir is Mount Hor, on which Aaron died, and whose towering bulk is a land-mark to the wanderer afar off in the surrounding deserts. It offers a commanding view over the plains and mountains below. "If I had never stood on the top of Mount Sinai," says Mr. Stephens, "I should say that nothing could exceed the desolation of the view from the summit of Mount Hor; its most striking objects being the dreary and rugged mountains of Seir, bare and naked of trees and verdure, and heaving their lofty summits to the skies, as if in vain and fruitless effort to excel the mighty pile on the top of which the high-priest of Israel was buried."

Yet even here all is not barren. The interior of these desolate mountains—their valleys and their hollows—present many a scene of verdure and beauty. While the same writer, in summing up his impressions, remembers that the mountains were barren, solitary, and desolate, and that the higher he ascended their aspect became more wild and rugged, and rose to sublimity and grandeur—he does not forget that, among these arid wastes of crumbling rock, there were beautiful streams gushing forth from the sides of the mountains; and sometimes small valleys, where the green grass and shrubs and bushes were putting forth in early spring; and that he saw among the stony mountains of Arabia Petræa more verdure than he had observed since he left the banks of the Nile.

The spot which has just been referred to, as that by which travellers are now attracted to the mountains of Seir, is the deep hollow in their bosom, whose tall cliffs offer those wonderful sculptures and excavations of temples, habitations, and tombs, which compose the ancient metropolis of Edom, now but lately revealed, in the freshness of its beauty, to the admiration of nations which have sprung into existence since it became a desolation. This, and other hollows and valleys of these mountains, exhibit some very striking geological characteristics, which, were they properly discriminated, might throw much light on their physical construction. All travellers mention, with wonder and admiration, the beautiful and varied appearance of the rock composing the cliffs which enclose the valley of Petra. "The whole stony rampart that encircled the city," says Mr. Stephens, "was of a peculiarity and beauty which I never saw elsewhere, being a dark ground with veins of white,

* About twenty-five miles east from the southern extremity of the Dead Sea.

* Laborde, whose authority we are following just here, appears to include porphyry with granite in this denomination.

† The reader must be mindful to distinguish this Wady Ghurundel from another of the same name (about midway between Suez and Mount Sinai), mentioned in the Bible History.

blue, red, purple, and sometimes scarlet and light orange, running through it in rainbow streaks; and within the chambers, where there had been no exposure to the action of the elements, the freshness and beauty of the colours, in which these waving lines were drawn, gave an effect hardly inferior to that of the paintings in the tombs of the kings at Thebes." Other travellers speak to the same effect; and Lord Lindsay adds that some of the oldest excavations are almost filled with earth, decomposed from the fragments that are constantly flaking off from the roof. "I was surprised," he says, "to find the stone so crumbling: it must have been as easy to cut as chalk: I could break it easily with my fingers." Stephens was informed by the Arabs that no stone veined like the rocks at Petra was to be found elsewhere: which at least shows that *they* knew of none like it.

A few miles to the north of this place is another valley, or rather defile, called Wady Sig. It has only been described by Lord Lindsay, whose description we quote for the sake of the impression of relief which it gives to the general picture, and of the vegetable products which it specifies:—"It is one of the most romantic defiles I ever saw: lofty crags, almost perpendicular, tower on each side, deep fissures yawning in their breasts, tufted with evergreens, and single isolated rocks guarding the pass like sentinels: the road winds through a thick wood of sedder, arrah, oleander, and acacia trees,—every shade of green."

Still more to the north occurs the broadest valley in the whole chain of mountains. It is that of El Ghoeyr, which, being the only one that offers a passage practicable to any large body of people, is, with good reason, conceived by Colonel Leake to be the "highway" through which the host of Israel vainly sought the permission of the Edomites to pass from the western desert into the eastern plains. It is described by Burckhardt as a large, rocky, and uneven basin, considerably lower than the eastern plain, upwards of twelve miles across at its eastern extremity, but narrowing towards the west. It is intersected by numerous wadys* of winter torrents, and by three or four valleys watered by rivulets, which unite below and flow into the great western valley. The Ghoeyr is famous for the excellent pasturage produced by its numerous springs; and it has, in consequence, become a favourite place of encampment for all the Bedouins of these mountains. The borders of the rivulets are overgrown with deflet† and the shrub rethem.‡ The rock is principally calcareous; and there are detached pieces of basalt, and large tracts of breccia, formed of sand, flint, and pieces of calcareous stone. "Calcareous with basalt" is the character which Burckhardt continues to assign to the still more northern part of these mountains. By this he probably means, as he explains near this, that the body of the mountain is calcareous, with its superficies covered with large basaltic blocks.

The chain of hills is of much less apparent height northward, approaching the Dead Sea, then southward, approaching the Gulf of Akabah; and among the circumstances which in this part render their aspect less stern and desolate, may be mentioned that the mountains are in parts overgrown with short balout-trees.

We have now, in the last place, to extend our attention southward to the desert region in which the host of Israel wandered many years, and to the mountains venerable beyond all others for the associations which the most ancient history in the world connects with them. In the conformities which may still be traced in this wild region, with the inc.. ations which that history offers, there is much to engage our attention, even were we to neglect the sacred character of the transactions from which those indications arise. But besides this, the region of Sinai is in itself, apart from the sacred interest connected with its deserts and its mountains, so striking and peculiar, as to deserve far more attention than we shall be able to allow it, although we are not without fear that some of our readers, less impressed than ourselves with a sense of the historical and physical interest of this region, may deem that here, and in some future pages, we afford it an undue share of our consideration.

The basin of the Arabian Gulf, which in its direction presents some analogy with the bed of the Nile, is, like it, divided into two arms at its northern extremity. The triangular space comprehended between these two arms is known under the name of the peninsula of Sinai, and must be regarded as pertaining to Arabia Petræa. The westernmost of the arms of the Red Sea, which enclose this triangle between them, is called the Gulf of Suez, from the town of that name, situated near its termination; and the easternmost arm bears the name of the Gulf of Akabah, from the fortress which stands near its head. The route of the Israelites, when they proceeded to the mountains of Sinai from Egypt, lay along the borders of the former gulf; and this is the route which travellers now take. In proceeding southward from Suez, they have, for the most part, a range of hills of small importance on their left hand: and these are nearest the road in the north, and gradually recede from it in the progress southward, and ultimately strike off across the peninsula, dividing it, as it were, into two parts. These intersecting hills bear the name of El Tyh, or of *the Wandering*, which name also belongs to the northern half of the peninsula beyond them; and are so called by the Arabs in memory of the wanderings of the Israelites. All these hills are of secondary formation, and are markedly disconnected, not only by this formation, but by broad valleys, from the mountains of the south. The intersecting El Tyh hills, which may be regarded as forming the northern boundary of the Sinai mountains, are the most regular ranges in the peninsula, being almost throughout of equal height, without any prominent peaks, and extending in an uninterrupted line eastward. The opposite coast of this peninsula, on the Gulf of Akabah, consists of a series of bays separated by projecting headlands, and exhibits, in its tall cliffs and capes, traces of primitive formations, which connect it physically with the southern mountains: and we have lately noticed, on the authority of Laborde, that these formations extend into the mountains of Seir as far as the Wady Ghurundel.

The proper mountains of Sinai, so renowned in Biblical history, are all in the southern part of the peninsula, or that part which is cut off by the El Tyh hills. This southern part, in the midst of which arise the mountains of Horeb and Sinai, presents a space of nearly 1200 square leagues, covered with primitive mountains, principally porphyritic. All the species of rock which appertain to this formation are here exhibited in an abundance and with a diversity which it would be very difficult to find elsewhere. The French scientific commissioners MM. Rozière and Coutelle, who made a long sojourn in the peninsula and explored much of this southern region, could think of no mountains which appeared to offer so many analogies as those of the Vosges. The nature of the rocks, their dispositions, accidents, passages, transitions, and the forms and elevations of the mountains, all suggested very striking resemblances.

The summits of Mounts Sinai, Horeb, Serbal, and Om Shomar, which are the most remarkable, rise to the height of about 8000 feet above the level of the neighbouring valleys, which are themselves elevated from 500 to 600 feet above the level of the surrounding sea. This region is separated from the foot of the secondary chain of El Tyh by a broad sandy plain, which affords good pasturage in spring, but, being destitute of water, is not much frequented even by Bedouins. This plain, on the land side, seems to correspond to others along the sea border, on both sides, after passing which the ascent begins, through various gently-sloping valleys, to the high central region of Sinai. We cannot clearly make out what extent Burckhardt gives to an observation which he makes soon after the ascent, by the usual road, begins:—"The ranges of mountains in this country differ in their formation from all the other Arabian chains which I have seen, the valleys reaching to the very summits, where they form a plain, and thence descend to the other side." We suppose this applies not to the valleys in the high central region itself, but to those in the ascent to it. The traveller has the lofty central summits in view several days before he comes to them; and when he reaches their borders, he finds that abrupt cliffs of granite, from 500 to 600 feet in height, their surface blackened by the sun, surround the avenues leading to the elevated platform to which the name of Sinai is more especially applied. Such cliffs enclose the holy mountains on three sides, leaving only the east and north-east sides, towards the Gulf of Akabah, more open to the view. It takes about four hours and a half, after reaching these cliffs, to arrive at the foot of Mount Sinai, through the defile which is followed by those travellers who take the nearest route from Suez. Arriving here, the traveller finds an extensive Greek convent, like a fortress, situated in so narrow a valley that while one part of the building stands upon the lower slope of Mount Horeb, a space of twenty paces only is left between its walls and the eastern mountains.

The names of Mounts Horeb, Sinai, Moses, St. Catherine, are applied by travellers in such sort, that the reader is often at a loss to distinguish their application; and it is only by a careful comparison of their accounts that he learns that the name of Horeb is now applied to the mountain at whose base the convent stands, and which forms a sort of breast from or upon which rise the twin summits of Mounts St. Catherine and Sinai, which last also bears the name of Moses (Jebel Mousa): or, in other words, that Mount

* The word *wady*, spelt by the French travellers *ouadi*, denotes the channel of a stream or river, or any valley or ravine through which a stream flows, whether constantly or only in the winter season.

† Solanum furiosum.

‡ Genista Rætam, Forsk.

[illegible] by the names which they currently [illegible] to inquire how properly those names have been [illegible]. The name of Sinai, the restricted use of which is thus [illegible], is, however, applied in a general way, as we have seen, to all [illegible] mountains, and, indeed, to the whole of the peninsula.

The summits of Mounts Sinai and St. Catherine are not visible from the valley in which the convent stands; and, unless previously prepared, the traveller is astonished, on arriving at the plain at the top of Horeb, to see the formidable ascents which rise before him. A steep ascent up Mount Horeb commences immediately behind the walls of the convent, to facilitate which, steps (said to be 14,000 in number) were anciently cut, even to the summit; but these are now either destroyed or so much damaged by the winter torrents, as to be of very little use. The ascent takes three-quarters of an hour, exclusively of the opportunity which the traveller may have taken, after twenty-five minutes' ascent, of breathing a short time under a large impending rock, hard by which is a well of water, cold as ice. At the top of this ascent is a large open space, or small plain, surrounded on all sides by mountains; high above all of which rises the lofty summit of Sinai, by which, from this place, the still loftier summit of St. Catherine is concealed, as both summits had been concealed by Horeb from the valley below. To this part of the mountain the venerable Scriptural name of Horeb is now more especially given; and here pilgrims generally pause before they assay the difficult enterprise before them. In the centre of the plain stands, enclosed by a stone fence, the only tree in the mountain—a cypress, planted by the monks upwards of one hundred years since; and near this is a tank which receives the winter-rains, and which is alleged to have been dug by the prophet Elias during his sojourn in the mountain. This name is also borne by an old convent, now deserted, containing a grotto which is said to have been his residence.

From this plain, a still steeper ascent of half an hour, the steps of which are also in ruins, leads to the summit of Mount Sinai. The plain at the top of the mountain does not exceed sixty paces in circumference, and on this the ruins of an ancient church are still to be seen, and near this, on a somewhat lower point, is a mosque, also in ruins, offering, together, rather a striking testimony of the concurrent respect with which both Christians and Moslems regard the holy mountain. The Jews make no pilgrimages here, nor do any memorials made with hands attest *their* interest in these mountains. And they need none: the rocks themselves, and the wildernesses, the valleys, the palm-trees, the bitter waters, and the bounding gulf—all bear witness, lasting as the world, of the close and marvellous connection of their history with the scenes which this wild region offers.

Some recent travellers have gratified us with an account of what they saw from the summit of this mountain, a view which Burckhardt was prevented by thick fog from enjoying. If he had not left us a full and clear account of what he afterwards perceived from the adjoining and high summit of St. Catherine, this might be much regretted, as few travellers equal him in the avoidance of vague general expressions in description, and in the precision and fulness of his information. In the present instance, Sir Frederick Henniker tells us that if he had to represent the end of the world, he would model it from Mount Sinai: and afterwards he calls it "a sea of desolation;" adding, "It would seem as if Arabia Petræa had once been an ocean of lava, and that while its waves were literally running mountains high, it was commanded suddenly to stand still." Laborde, on arriving at the summit, was surprised at the briskness of the air. The eye sought in vain, he says, to catch some prominent object among the chaos of rocks which were tumbled around the base, and vanished in the distance in the form of raging waves. Nevertheless, he distinguished the Red Sea, the mountains of Africa, and some summits of mountains which were easily recognisable by their shapes; as Om Shomar, by its rounded masses, Serbal, by its shooting points, and El Tyh, by its immense prolongation. Mr. Stephens also gives an animated glance at the "bleak solitudes and terrible majesty of Sinai," and is particularly impressed by the sacred associations of "the holy mountain." That this was really "the holy mountain," admits of a question: but whatever truth or beauty exists in the feelings which are excited in this or other travellers by sacred associations, are, here at least, scarcely affected by questions concerning the identity of particular mountains; for while these do not considerably differ in altitude or formation, and it is rather by [illegible] than by the particular mountain that these feelings [illegible] in the scene of the [illegible]

[illegible] and that these are the valleys which they trod in [illegible].

None of those travellers whom we have cited thought it worth their while to ascend to the neighbouring and somewhat taller summit of St. Catherine—an inappropriate name, which it takes from a stupid legend about a female "saint" so called. The ascent is considerably more difficult than that of Mount Sinai: and those who contemplate the ascent usually go down to the valley which separates them, and remain till the next morning in the small convent of El Erbayn, or the Forty [Martyrs]. Some, however, return to the great convent at the foot of Mount Horeb, making separate expeditions of the two ascents. Of this number was the candid old traveller Morison, who, with others, tells us that this mountain is not only higher than its neighbour, but is distinguished from it by having no ascending pathway, or any trace of the course by which it is usually mounted; so that, without such experience as the guiding monks possess, the pilgrim might stray a hundred times from the right track. One of his party lost heart at a third of the ascent, and returned to the convent; and Morison ingenuously confesses that, as he proceeded, he weighed three or four times in his mind the propriety of following this example, rather than of persisting in an undertaking of apparently so much peril and difficulty. "We found, in fact," he says, "certain points which it seemed little easier to surmount than to scale the skies; nevertheless, animated in the end by the example of our Greek monks, who scrambled up like cats, and finding here a small hollow in which I could rest the point of my foot, and there a ledge which I could grasp with my hand, I at last reached the summit." From the more explicit information of Burckhardt it appears that the worst part is on approaching the highest part of the mountain, which consists of a single immense block of granite, the surface of which is so smooth as to render the ascent very difficult. This mountain, at least, is not sterile. The ascent takes two hours. The side of this mountain is noted for its excellent pasturage; herbs sprout up everywhere between the rocks, and, as many of them are odoriferous, the scent, early in the morning, when the dew falls, is delicious. This luxuriant vegetation reaches up to the granite block which caps the mountain; which thus, upon the whole, presents a verdure which, had it been turf, instead of shrubs and herbs, would have completed the resemblance which it bears to some of the Alpine summits. The summit of this mountain, like that of Mount Mousa, terminates sharply, and upon it there is nothing remarkable save a small ancient oratory, built of loose uncemented stones, and hardly high enough within to allow a person to stand upright.

The summit of Mount St. Catherine commands a most extensive view of the whole region in which it stands. The details comprehended in this magnificent view have been laid down by Burckhardt with admirable precision; and the substance of his statement, with contributions from other sources, is necessary to complete the picture of this most interesting region, with which we are endeavouring to furnish our readers.

From this elevated peak the directions of the different surrounding chains of mountains, and of the valleys which divide and intersect them, can be distinctly traced. It is from hence seen that the upper nucleus of the Sinai, which is composed almost entirely of granite and porphyry, forms a rocky wilderness of an irregular circular shape, intersected by many narrow valleys, and from thirty to forty miles in diameter. It contains the highest mountains of the peninsula; and their shaggy and pointed peaks, and steep and shattered sides, render it clearly distinguishable from all the rest of the country in view. It is upon this highest region of the peninsula that the fertile valleys which produce fruit-trees are found; and these are principally at the distance of three or four hours' journey from the convent, to the west and south-west. Water, from the numerous mountain-springs, abounds in all this region; and hence the comparative fertility of the valleys: for vegetable mould either does not exist or is so scanty, that the gardens of the convent are supplied with earth brought all the way from Egypt on the backs of camels: but in this climate, wherever water is abundant, the very rocks will produce vegetation. It is hence the refuge of all the Bedouins of the peninsula (about 4000 in number) when the low country is parched with consuming droughts; and hence this region contrasts advantageously with the northern part of the peninsula, which is an absolute desert; and the inhabitants of the central and southern parts, from the comparisons they are thus led to make, regard their country as the happiest under heaven. The air also is here delightfully pure and cool. The fell simoom never reaches to this high region; and at the convent, at the foot of Horeb, the thermometer may be 72°, while in the low country, and particularly near the [illegible], it will be at least 102° to 103° [illegible]

the whole of the upper Sinai is deeply covered with snow, which chokes up many of the passes, and often renders the mountains of Moses and St. Catherine inaccessible. Upon the whole, the climate is so different from that of Egypt, that fruits are nearly two months later in ripening there than at Cairo.

After this general statement with respect to this upper region, we can the better attend to the particulars of the view which engages our attention from the summit of Mount St. Catherine, which stands nearly in the centre of it. The characteristics to the north of this central region have already been sufficiently indicated for our present purposes. We therefore turn at once to the east, and observe that the slope of the upper mountains is much less abrupt on this than on the opposite side. The mountains in this direction beyond the high district of Sinai, run in a lower range towards one of the principal cross valleys, called Wady Sahl, beyond which, to the east and north-east, the chains intersect each other in many inferior masses of irregular height, till they reach the Gulf of Akabah, which was clearly discernible to Burckhardt from mount St. Catherine, when the sun was just rising over the mountains of the Arabian side of the gulf. All the mountains bordering on the gulf are of secondary height, except in the short extent (in about the centre of the line) between Noweyba and Dahab, where they rise to considerable elevation. The country to the south-east, down nearly to the terminating headland of the peninsula, is also occupied by mountains of minor size, and the valleys are so narrow that few of them can be distinguished from our point of view; and the whole country in that direction appears an uninterrupted wilderness of barren mountains.

Southward, the view is bounded by the high mountain of Om Shomar, which forms a nucleus of itself, apparently unconnected with the upper Sinai, though bordering close upon it. To the right of this mountain the sea may be distinguished, in the neighbourhood of Tor, near which begins a chain of low calcareous mountains, called Jebel Hemam [or death], which is separated from the upper Sinai by a broad gravelly plain, called El Kaa, across which the road from Tor to Suez passes. This plain terminates to the W.N.W. of Mount St. Catherine, and nearly in the direction of Mount Serbal. Toward this plain of El Kaa, the central Sinai mountains are very abrupt, and have no secondary intermediate chain between them and the plain at their feet. The mountain of Serbal is separated from the upper plain by some valleys, especially Wady Hebran, and it forms with several neighbouring mountains a separate cluster, terminating in peaks, the highest of which appears to be as high as Mount St. Catherine. It borders on the valley of Feiran [Faran, Paran], and being situated to the north-west of the great central cluster of mountains, it is necessarily the first high mountain at which travellers coming direct from the head of the gulf arrive.

This survey indicates a few objects which we must examine a little more particularly.

First, there is the southern mountain of Om Shomar, which we do not know that any traveller but Burckhardt has hitherto visited; and he did not mount the highest summit, which seemed to him impossible to reach, the sides being almost perpendicular, and the rock so smooth as to afford no hold for the feet. He halted two hundred feet below the top, and there a beautiful view opened upon the Gulf of Suez, and the neighbourhood of Tor, which place was distinctly visible, while the wide plain of El Kaa lay extended at his feet. This mountain consists of granite, the lower part of which is red, while the top is almost white, so as to appear from a distance like chalk; this arises from the large proportion of white feldspath in it, and the smallness of the particles of hornblende and mica. In the middle of the mountain, between the granite rocks, are broad strata of brittle black slate, mixed with layers of quartz and feldspath, and with micaceous schistus. The quartz includes thin strata of mica, of the most brilliant white colour, which is quite dazzling in the sun, and forms a striking contrast with the blackened surface of the white and red granite.

The mountain of Serbal derives a peculiar interest from the consideration which led the Editor of the 'Pictorial Bible' (note on Exod. xix. 2) to conclude that this, and not the so-called Jebel Mousa, is the mount on which the law was delivered to Moses. The present merely descriptive account does not require us to copy the arguments on which this conclusion was founded, or to add those further considerations which might be adduced in its support. It is sufficient now to remind or apprise the reader that this view has been taken, and to express our conviction that it has not been disturbed by any explorations of the Sinai region which have since been made.*

* The French commissioners seem to be the only persons who mention this mountain by name, prior to Burckhardt, and he [illegible] are the only travellers by whom it has been ascended. [illegible]

the old pilgrim travellers, that although they could not fail to see the remarkable mountain, none of them condescend to notice it in their books, as it was not pointed out to them as connected with any of the circumstances which made this region venerable in their eyes. The only notice of it we have been able to find is in Morison, who mentions it as "une haute montagne," without naming it or giving any description. It has been treated with rather more respect since Burckhardt directed attention to it; but it is generally despatched in a few lines, in which its general aspect is stated, travellers who come landwise from Suez being careful to reserve their descriptive resources for Mounts St. Catherine and Mousa; and those who, having come by water to Tor and returning by land, have already been at those mountains, find, by the time they get to Mount Serbal, that their resources of this kind are exhausted.

The mountain has in all five peaks, and Burckhardt says that the two highest of them are those to the east, one of which he ascended. These rise like cones, and are distinguishable from a great distance, particularly on the road from Suez. The ascent is very difficult; and Burckhardt was completely exhausted by the time he reached the lower summit, to climb to which took him not less than four hours. Here there is a small plain with some trees, and the ruins of a small reservoir for water. After reposing here for awhile, our traveller ascended the eastern peak, and reached its top in three-quarters of an hour, after great exertion; for the rock is so smooth and slippery, as well as steep, that, although barefooted, he was obliged frequently to crawl upon his belly to avoid being precipitated below; and had he not casually met with a few shrubs to grasp, he would probably have been obliged to abandon the attempt, or have rolled down the cliff. The summit of this eastern peak consists of one enormous mass of granite, the smoothness of which is broken by only a few partial fissures, presenting an appearance not unlike the ice-covered tops of the Alps. The sides of this peak, at a few paces below its top, are formed of large insulated blocks, thirty or forty feet long, which appear as if just suspended in the act of rushing down the steep. Near the top there are steps regularly formed with large loose stones, which must have been brought from below, and so judiciously are they arranged, that they have resisted the devastations of time, and may still be used for the ascent. Burckhardt was afterwards informed that these steps are the continuation of a regular path from the bottom of the mountain, which is in several parts cut through the rock with great labour. The eastern peak, which from below looks as sharp as a needle, has a platform on its summit, of about fifty paces in circumference. On this is a heap of small loose stones about two feet high, forming a circle about twelve feet in diameter. Just below the top, every granite block that presents a smooth surface offers inscriptions, the greater part of which are illegible. Similar inscriptions are found on the sides of the small caverns, large enough to hold a few persons, which exist between the masses of stone.

As the eye is very apt to be deceived in estimating the relative height of mountains, Burckhardt hesitates to give any positive opinion as to that of Mount Serbal; but it seemed to him to be higher than all the peaks, including Jebel Mousa, and very little lower than Mount St. Catherine.

Rüppel ascended the western peak, which he regarded as the highest. He found its height above the sea to be 6342 Paris feet, so that, instead of being higher, it turns out to be 1700 feet lower than the summit of St. Catherine. Its *apparently* equal or even greater elevation proceeds from its rising magnificently from the midst of far inferior ridges.

So much has been said of the inscriptions found on the rocks and cliffs of Sinai, that we also may be expected to say something about them. It is remarkable that those near the summit of Mount Serbal are alone those which are found on the higher mountains, or which are engraved on granite, if we except such as are found in the valley *at the foot* of Mount St. Catherine, and which appear to have been the work of pilgrims visiting the rock in that place which is absurdly alleged to be that which was stricken by Moses. With these exceptions, the inscriptions are, in general, little more than scratches on the smooth cliffs, of sandstone and other comparatively soft rocks, of the hills and sides of the valleys in the lower region of Sinai. They consist of writing in characters which no one has been able to decipher, and of rude figures of animals. When the existence of such inscriptions was first made known to the European public, some sensation was excited by the notion that they were the work of the Israelites during their sojourn in this region. This notion has long been relinquished; and although no certainty has been attained, yet, as these inscriptions [illegible] the road to [illegible]

[illegible] in the [illegible] century—at a time when [illegible] was regarded as the true Sinai of the sacred writings. [illegible] figures, interspersed or detached, we are disposed to regard, with Burckhardt, as not traceable to the same source, but as being the work of the Bedouin shepherds of the peninsula: for while these figures are executed in a ruder manner and with a less steady hand than the inscriptions, they exclusively represent such animals as are natives of the peninsula—as camels, mountain and other goats, and gazelles, but principally the two first; and it is an ascertained fact, that the present Bedouins of the peninsula are in the habit of carving the figures of goats, at least, upon the rocks and in grottoes. Speaking of the inscriptions which appear on the rocks lying near what always appears to have been a resting-place for pilgrims and travellers, Burckhardt observes, "they have evidently been done in great haste and very rudely, sometimes with large letters and sometimes with small, and seldom in straight lines. The characters appear to be written from right to left, and although mere scratches, an instrument of metal must have been employed, for the rock, although of sandstone, is of considerable hardness. Some of the letters are not larger than half an inch; but they are generally about fifteen lines in height and four lines in breadth. The same character is seen at the beginning of almost every line, whence it appears that none of the inscriptions are of any length, but that they consist merely of short phrases, all similar to each other, in the beginning at least. They are, perhaps, prayers, or the names of pilgrims, on their way to Mount Sinai, who had rested under this rock."

But the principal display of such inscriptions is found in the Wady Mokatteb, or the Written Valley, which lies on the most frequented road to Serbal and Sinai, and where the cliffs are so situated as to afford a fine shelter to travellers during the mid-day hours, to which circumstances may, doubtless, be attributed the numerous inscriptions found in the valley. This valley extends for about three hours' march in the direction N W.; in the upper part it is three miles across, having to the left (coming *from* Sinai) high mountains; and to the right, a chain of lower sandstone hills Half way down it becomes narrower, and then takes the name of Seyh Szeder. In most places the sandstone rocks present abrupt cliffs, twenty or thirty feet high. Large masses have separated themselves from these cliffs, and lie at their feet in the valley The cliffs and rocks are thickly covered with inscriptions, which are continued, with intervals of a few hundred paces only, for at least six miles; and similar inscriptions are found, in the lower part of the valley, where it narrows, upon the sandstone rocks of the opposite or north eastern side of the valley. They are exactly of the same kind as those which have already been mentioned. Some of them are cut at the height of twelve or fifteen feet, which must have required a ladder to ascend to them. They are in general cut deeper than those in the granite of the upper country, but in the same careless style. Among these many are evidently Greek, containing, probably, like the others, the names of those who passed here in their pilgrimage to the holy mountain. Some of the latter contain Jewish names in Greek characters. There is a vast number of drawings of mountain goats and camels, the latter being sometimes represented as laden and with riders on their backs. Crosses are also seen, indicating that the inscribers were Christians.

We have seen that Burckhardt calls the stone of Wady Mokatteb, sandstone. Laborde describes it as a crumbly freestone; and M. de Rozière, viewing and figuring it as a mineralogist, more precisely indicates it as psammite—"the psammite of Mokatteb," and describes it as composed of small quartzose grains, rather unequal, feebly aggregated, and strewn with micaceous spangles. With this correction as to the nature of the stone, Laborde's account of the manner in which nature appears to have prepared these vast tablets to receive the writings which they bear, deserves attention. The effect of running waters, as well as of the humidity of the atmosphere, is to undermine the base of the crumbly rocks in which the bed of this valley is hollowed out. Having then no support, they fall away, leaving behind them a smooth and uniform surface. The rocks may be supposed to have been thus undermined at the base when one of those earthquakes, of which evident traces remain, disturbed them with sufficient violence to cause the whole of the covering so unsupported to fall to pieces. The walls of the valley then appeared such as they are at the present day,—uniform throughout their whole extent, and defended at bottom by the masses which had been detached from them. The pilgrims who passed found these immense tablets too inviting not to multiply upon them their names, their wishes, and the usual exclamations of travellers; and the rocks, not having then been hardened by the air, easily received the short inscriptions they wished them to bear.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

([1]) Height of Lebanon, p 419 —The mountains of Lebanon being the highest in the whole chain of the Syrian mountains, and Jebel Es-sheikh being the highest in Lebanon, it follows that it is also the highest of the entire range.

That Lebanon is the highest part of all Syria is proved by the course of its two principal rivers, the Orontes and the Jordan, which arising at the opposite extremities of the range, are compelled, by the declivities, to shape their courses, the one to the extreme north, and the other to the extreme south, of Syria The port of Larneca, in Cyprus, is distant thirty leagues; but the traveller scarcely leaves it before he discovers the higher summits of Lebanon capped with clouds. The height of the summits of the mountains of Libanus or Anti-Libanus has not been measured; but an approximating estimate may be formed from a comparison of facts furnished by Volney, Burckhardt, Clarke, and others. During winter, the mountains throughout the whole extent from Scanderoon to northern Palestine, are covered with snow, and its disappearance or continuance on the advance of summer of course affords a test of comparative elevation with reference to the point of perpetual congelation, which, in this latitude, may be taken at 11,000 feet. Now, in and after the month of March all this snow dissolves, except in the higher regions of Lebanon. The range of Anti-Libanus generally must not be included in this exception; for when Burckhardt reached the summit, so early as March 22, he observes that not only had the heavy rains, usual at the season, dissolved the greater part of the snow, but that he found there some stunted oaks; circumstances which evidently demonstrate that this must be considerably below the point of perpetual snow; and probably the estimate of 9000 feet, which we have [illegible] may be correct. Even on the higher summits of the Western [illegible], where the snow continues later, it disappears as the season [illegible], [illegible] in the highest cavities, and towards the north-east, [illegible] from the [illegible]-winds and the rays of the sun. "In [illegible] Volney, "I saw it still remaining in 1784, at the [illegible] with heat in the valley of Baalbec." As, therefore, it is only under a combination of favourable accidents that snow remains all the year on the very highest points of Western Lebanon, it is not to be supposed that their elevation *exceeds*, even if it barely reaches, the limit of 11,000 feet. The southern part of Anti-Libanus, which bears the distinct name of Jebel Es-sheikh (Mount Hermon), is the only portion of the whole that appears to be unquestionably above that limit, but how much above it our information does not enable us to state. In one of the best maps of the Holy Land (Palmer's), the height is given as "12,000 or 15,000 feet." This loose way of stating heights will not do, but it results, apparently, from the above considerations, that the height of Jebel Es-sheikh cannot well be *less* than 11,000 feet. Elliot says of this mountain that it is "considered the most elevated peak of Syria, and thought to rival Mount Blanc, though the high land on which it stands detracts considerably from its apparent altitude, and makes it a less imposing object than the king of European mountains, as seen from the Italian valley of Aosta" Dr Clarke, observing this mountain in July from the plain of Esdraelon, says, "This summit was so lofty that the snow entirely covered the upper part of it, not lying in patches as, during summer, upon the tops of some very elevated mountains, but investing all the higher part with that perfect white and smooth velvet-like appearance which snow only exhibits when it is very deep." Elliot tells us that the mount takes its name of Jebel Es-sheikh, or Old Man's Mountain, from the resemblance which the vivacious fancy of the Orientals has traced in the summit of the mountain topped with snow, which sometimes lies in lengthened streaks upon its sloping ridges, to the hoary head and beard of a venerable Sheikh.

([2]) The Mount of Beatitudes, p. 420.—The hill which bears this name is of too little geographical consequence to claim a place where the principal mountains alone are professed to be noticed. But its celebrity as the hill on which the Sermon on the Mount is supposed

to have been delivered, will not permit us to pass it altogether unobserved. It is about thirteen miles to the south of Safed, the road from which descends for two hours, and then crosses several of the other mountains of Upper Galilee before it arrives at the foot of this mountain. The Mount of Beatitudes, with two projecting summits on one of its extremities, bears some resemblance to the back of a camel, and is itself low, although the plain on which it stands is of considerable elevation, and commands a beautiful prospect. "In front," says Mr. Elliot, "there are several ranges of hills rising one above another; the mountains of Upper and Lower Galilee, and the city of Safed, elevated above all, like a sentinel on a post of observation: on the left is Tabor; on the north-west is the long, high range of Lebanon; and on the right the sea of Tiberias, with the hills of Iturea and Gaulonitis." And with reference to Safed, as the city to which Christ is supposed to have directed attention from the Mount of Beatitudes, the same traveller observes, "Such is the height of Safed, that from every point where it is seen it cannot fail to form the most remarkable feature in the landscape; and if the position assigned to our Lord, when delivering his unparalleled discourse, be correct, Bethulia, the ancient Safed, rose in unrivalled majesty immediately before him."—There is no real foundation for the opinion so generally expressed, that Safed was the ancient Bethulia. It is now believed to have been of modern origin; and its castle was, most probably, erected by the crusaders. It was besieged by Saladin, and surrendered to that celebrated Saracen; and though it again came into the hands of the Christians, it was ultimately taken by the Turks, who made the castle one of their strongholds. A number of Jews resided there; and the names of some of the most eminent rabbis are connected with the "schools of Safed." Of the castle only a shattered fragment of one of the towers now remains; and though there are still some inhabitants in the ruins, they are in the most wretched state of poverty.—An account of the earthquake which destroyed this city will be found at pages 444, 445.

(3) Carmel, p. 421.—"Padre Camillo (one of the monks of the convent on Mount Carmel) was unwilling to leave his cave, and as the rain had again commenced, we remained there for an hour or two longer. 'What a place for uninterrupted contemplation!' cried he. 'Here, indeed,' spouting out a passage from his favourite historian, he continued, 'the plants, the rugged rocks, the moaning of the wind, the prospect of the ocean, the murmuring of streams, the lowing of the herds, the frisking of the flocks, the shady valley, the singing of the birds, the delightful clime, the variety of flowers, the odour of the aromatic herbs, how they refresh the soul!' This sounded very sweetly in Italian; and as he delivered it with all his heart, standing in the mouth of the cave as if he had been before an altar, from the very spot where so much was in reality assembled, too, it came with great force, for the catalogue is not overcharged."—Skinner, i. 103.

(4) Levels in Sinai and Palestine, p. 422.—In No. 600 of the 'Athenæum' there is a report of the proceedings at a meeting of the Geographical Society, when an abstract was read of Mr. Russegger's journey from Sinai to Hebron and Jerusalem. The notice, though short, is exceedingly valuable, from the information which it gives on a subject which has been entirely overlooked by the mass of travellers. We therefore transcribe nearly the whole of it:—

"On his return from Egypt at the close of 1838, Mr. Russegger went to Suez, and from that point set out, in a south-east direction, to ascend Mount Sinai; and he gives a series of barometrical levels, from the shores of the Red Sea, to the summit of Mount St. Catherine, which by his measurement rises 8168 French feet above the sea. From Mount Sinai he crossed the desert of El Tyh, in a direct north line to Hebron, and obtained twenty-two levels on this route also; from Hebron he went to Bethlehem, and found its elevation to be 2528 feet; and thence to Jerusalem, which he states at 2479 French, or 2640 English feet.

"Mr. Russegger devoted much attention to the barometric measurements of the level of the Dead Sea; and after other observations, on hanging up his barometer on the shores of that sea, he could no longer continue his observations, for the quicksilver *rose to the top of the tube.* He then calculates the following depressions:—village Rihhah (supposed Jericho), in the valley of the Jordan, 774 feet; bathing-place of the pilgrims in the Jordan, 1269 feet; and the Dead Sea at its northern end, 1319 French feet, or nearly 1400 English feet *below* the level of the Mediterranean!"

CHAPTER II.—GEOLOGY AND MINERALOGY.

Our information concerning the geology and mineralogy of Palestine is remarkably imperfect and indistinct; for these were matters which the older travellers entirely overlooked; and the dispersed and incidental notices with which we have more lately been supplied are found to be very defective, when an attempt is made to combine their facts in one connected statement. Hasselquist, Shaw, Volney, De Rozière, Seetzen, Clarke, Burckhardt, Irby and Mangles, Buckingham, Schubert, Dr. Robinson, and Dr. Olin, furnish nearly all the information which can be obtained; and that is only such as will supply materials for the statement which we have now to offer. That it is a very imperfect one we know; but are persuaded that it comprises the substance of all existing information, and that nothing of any consequence has escaped our researches.

Some geological information has been given in the preceding chapter, particularly as regards the mountains of Seir and Sinai; and indeed all the information which we are now about to supply might have been incorporated with that chapter, had it not seemed more desirable to separate, when it could conveniently be managed, the descriptive from the scientific details. This chapter, therefore, must necessarily assume the form of a scientific appendix or sequel to the preceding; while we shall endeavour, as far as possible, to divest the statements we have to offer of that technical character which might perhaps exclude them from the attention of the general reader.

Limestone is the prevailing constituent of the mountains of all Syria,* as well as of Asia Minor and Greece. The general character of the stone of the mountains which compose the great central ridges of Syria, or which ramify from them, is that of a hard calcareous rock, sonorous when struck, and of a whitish or pale yellow colour. It is, in short, a very hard kind of limestone, disposed in strata variously inclined, and, like all limestone strata, affording a great number of caverns, to which frequent allusion is made in the Scriptures. Some of them are capable of containing 1500 men, and there is one near Damascus which will even afford shelter to 4000. In mountains of this construction it is not unusual for huge masses of rock to take the shape of ruins of towns and castles. This is remarkably observed in the road from Aleppo to Hamah, but scarcely in any part of Palestine.

The prevailing character of the constituent rock undergoes, of course, various modifications of texture, colour, form, and intermixture, in different parts of the country; and, commencing at the north, it may be useful to specify some of the appearances which, in different localities, it exhibits, and some of the more remarkable changes which it sustains. But it is to be regretted that the travellers who notice such particulars seldom mention the extent to which their statement is to be understood; so that it is seldom possible to distinguish whether the recorded appearance is strictly local or of extensive range.

In the far north—that is, in the hills which bound on the north the plain in which stood the ancient Hamath—the calcareous rock is noticed by Burckhardt as being "of considerable hardness, and of a reddish yellow colour."

That the name "Lebanon" is formed from a word signifying *whiteness* is, we imagine, not because of the snow which, during part of the year, covers the summit, but on account of that whitish colour which has been described as one of the *general* characteristics of these mountains. This may be exemplified by the observation of Buckingham, who, in his ascent from the sea-shore (at Tripoli) to the cedars, rested on Jebel Ainneto, and there noted that the mountain on which he stood was wholly composed of white limestone of different qualities; and that the lower mountains over which he had passed, and which now lay under his view, seemed very much to resemble the white hills on the banks of the Jordan, as seen from the Mount of Olives, near Jerusalem. This comparison is valuable. At a point more elevated in the same quarter, but some miles more to the south, at the point where the name of Jebel Libnan *now* terminates, Burckhardt observes that the rocks are all in perfectly horizontal layers, some of which are thirty or forty yards, while others are only a few yards, in thickness.

From carefully comparing the different authorities on the subject, it appears to us that the texture of the rock which lines the valley of the Jordan and its lakes is much less dense than that of Lebanon, or even of that in the central parts of Palestine. It appears also that, along this valley, the density of the rock diminishes as we proceed southward, at least as far as the Dead Sea. We know certainly that the texture of the rock is more loose and light along the valley of the Jordan than it is in Lebanon or in the heart of Palestine; we know also that the stone which lines the basin of the Dead Sea is of still less density than this; and, although we know not exactly whether the stone of Mount Seir, still more to the south, is more or less dense than that of the Dead Sea, we do know that it is a stone easily wrought, and that its texture is very loose.

Buckingham speaks of the rock at the ruins near Om Keis as of "coarse grey limestone," and it probably extends throughout this district, as Burckhardt speaks of the uniform appearance of the calcareous stone in all the country between the rivers Mandhour and Zerka. In this neighbourhood—that is, off the south-east of the Lake of Gennesareth—there is a considerable display of that black basaltic rock which we shall hereafter have much occasion to notice. The river Mandhour, which passes to the north of the high plain of Om Keis, towards the Jordan, flows through a deep bed of it; the western declivities of the same plain are also basaltic; and eastward, in the way from Hebras to Om Keis, Burckhardt saw alternate layers of calcareous and basaltic rock, with thin layers of flint. None of this appears in the higher mountains southward to the Zerka, which are entirely calcareous; but the mountain immediately to the south of that river exhibits the calcareous stone with layers of various coloured sandstone, and large blocks of the black basaltic stone of the Haouran. Mr. Buckingham, who crossed the mountains of Gilead a few miles to the south of the same river, notes that the first range of hills, from the Jordan, was generally of white limestone, but the second had a mixture of various kinds of rocks,—showing that the diversified appearance which is observed near the bank of the Zerka is prolonged to some distance southward.

On the west, approaching the Dead Sea from Jerusalem, the hard light-coloured limestone of the hills near that city is exchanged for a limestone of looser texture, sometimes white and sometimes greyish, between which are layers of a reddish micaceous stone, or *saxum purum micaceum*; the shore of the lake exhibits, in several places, perpendicular strata, formed of reddish brittle earth, which would doubtless in time become slate enclosed in limestone.

Returning to the east, and ascending southward from the bed of the river Arnon,* we find, in the upper part of the calcareous mountains, the ground covered with large blocks of the black Haouran stone. Lower down, small pieces of mica and petrified shells are also found. Still more to the south, the mountains are all calcareous with flint, and abound in petrified shells. Here also are met with fine specimens of calcareous spath, which the Arabs honour with the name of *hadjar ain el shems*, the Sun's eye.

The mountains of Seir, or those which extend southward between the Dead Sea and the Ælanitic Gulf, need not engage our attention further in this place, as the separate notice which we have given to them embodies all the mineralogical information we have been able to obtain.

But the Sinai mountains must again engage our attention; and

* As some writers *distinguish* Palestine and Phœnicia *from* Syria, we take this opportunity of stating that, wherever we use the name "Syria," without clearly expressing or implying such a distinction, we use it as a proper and convenient general name for all that region extending from Asia Minor to the borders of Arabia and Egypt, of which Palestine and Phœnicia are but parts.

* Now *Wady Modjeb*.

in turning to them we may again remind the reader that, while the inclusion of this Arabian region in our account, and the space we are allowing to it, is amply justified by the superior interest in Hebrew history, and the unquestionably superior geological interest of this region to any which the proper limits of Palestine include, our information concerning it is far more ample and precise than we possess concerning any other region of south-western Asia. If, therefore, the confessedly disproportionate attention we afford to it gives occasion for question or remark, it may be sufficient to answer, that the disproportion arises less from any redundance in the account of this region, than from the aspect of meagre brevity which the want of adequate materials obliges us to give to the account of districts which would in themselves be entitled to an equal measure of notice.

Before proceeding to furnish the additional information contained in this chapter concerning the geological characteristics of Sinai, it gives us great pleasure to introduce some reflections of M. de Rozière, which he makes in the course of his observations on the engraved representations of mineralogical specimens which are given in the 'Description de l'Egypte,' and which offer very many examples of the Sinai rocks. "The rocks of Arabia, those of Horeb and Sinai, excite another sort of curiosity—a curiosity not arising from their employment in the arts, but from their association with the famous deeds of the sacred history and the sojourn of the Israelites. The Greek monks, who since the first ages of Christianity have constantly dwelt in this region, profess to have preserved the traditional knowledge of all the places and of every point which is mentioned in the history of the Jewish people; and it is this [alleged] power of identification which has excited towards this country the veneration of the Oriental Christians and the fervour of pilgrimages. The traveller of every sect, of every communion, visits, even to this day, with a respectful admiration, the spots in which the might of God was once manifested by so many miracles. These monuments are doubtless viewed under differing impressions, by reason of the diversities of religious opinion; but they inspire in all men a certain interest, which makes them desire to possess or to retain a clear idea not only of their forms, but of their nature." On such grounds he explains and vindicates the very particular attention he gives to this region, when his proper subject was Egypt; and on similar grounds, and with greater propriety, we, whose proper subject is Palestine, explain and justify the attention which we also give to the Sinai mountains.

Having viewed the mountains of the extensive region which our inquiries embrace, in what may be called the historical direction, from north to south, it may be well to reverse this order for awhile; and this chiefly for the sake of the Sinai mountains, that we may see clearly, as at both ends, the connections of the general system in which Palestine is involved.

The *mechanical* connection of the Sinai mountains, as the culminating mass of the great Lebanon chain, is manifest; but, although the mechanical connection of these mountains with those of Egypt, on the opposite side of the gulf, is broken by the bed of the Red Sea, the physical connection—the connection of homogeneity—still remains most evident, and requires to be noticed here, though not to be prominently adduced.

It is, then, observed that all the mountains of the principal chain, from the south-west of the cataracts of the Nile to the north-east of the deserts of Sinai, are primitive. In the southernmost part they belong principally t the granitic formation, in the middle part to the schistose, and in the northern to the porphyritic. Between the two last we find numerous rocks pertaining to this very interesting formation, composed essentially of feldspath, in confused laminæ, and of a large quantity of amphibole (or hornblende), without quartz or mica. This is very improperly called *syenite* by the German geologists; for it is absolutely foreign to the mountains of Syene and the neighbourhood (which certainly belong to the granite formation), although it constitutes the principal mountains of Arabia Petræa, and particularly of Mount Sinai, and all the neighbouring summits. For this reason the French scientific commissioners thought it unadvisable to continue to apply to the stone of these mountains the name (*syenite*) which should properly belong to the granite of Syene, but chose rather to modify the name slightly, to bring it into conformity with that of its proper country, calling it *Sinaïte*, and which is in all cases to be understood as the specific name of the principal constituent of the mountains, which travellers unacquainted with terms of more precise distinction describe under the general name of granite.

M. de Roziere draws a line which divides the primitive from the secondary formation. It commences in the mountains to the west of Elephantine, and is afterwards found, more to the north, on the other side of the Nile, increasing its distance from that river as it proceeds northward. It traverses, in a very oblique direction, the Troglodytic deserts, and is subsequently met with following the same course Arabia Petræa. It cuts the axis of the Sinai peninsula at about three short days' journey to the north of Mount Sinai, beyond the valley of Feiran; and appears to be prolonged, in the same direction, to join the mountains of Syria. On this last point M. de Rozière was doubtful; but his conjectural statement has since been confirmed by the actual observations of Laborde, which demonstrate—as shown in the account which we gave in the preceding chapter—that the primitive formation extends into the mountains of Seir.

All the mountains to the south of this line are of primitive formation; while all to the north of it, to the Mediterranean, are of secondary formation, and principally calcareous, with the exception of a band, of varying breadth, composed of mountains of sandstone and pudding-stone, which are almost always found interposed between the primitive and secondary formations. There are, indeed, long ridges of quartzose pudding-stone in the midst of the calcareous region,* and calcareous mountains are found upon the borders of the Red Sea, in the southernmost of the divisions to which this statement applies; but these and other exceptions do not interfere with the accuracy of the general definition.

We have been accustomed to conclude, on the authority of Irby and Mangles, that the first traces, however faint, of ignigenous rocks were to be met with on the southern borders of the Dead Sea, although they are not found elsewhere till we approach the Gulf of Akabah. From the statements of these indefatigable enquirers, we learn that towards the southern extremity of the lake, the low plain between its edge and the foot of the eastern mountains presents innumerable fragments of red and grey granite; grey, red, and black porphyry; serpentine, a beautiful black basalt, breccia, and other kinds of stone *from the neighbouring mountains.* On the other hand, M. Russegger, in his communication to the Geographical Society, expressly declares that he sought in vain, around the basin of the Dead Sea, for any trace of volcanic or Plutonic rocks, porphyry, granite, trachyte, &c., or, indeed, any rock at all resembling them. But, as it does not appear that he visited the *southern* extremity of the lake, to which alone the statement of Irby and Mangles refers, we consider that it leaves their testimony unimpeached, while it serves to show that the appearances which they noticed do not extend to the northern borders of the lake.

We have already seen that the higher or central region of Sinai is entirely composed of ignigenous or Plutonic rock, granite, or, more precisely, sinaïte, forming the principal constituent of the higher mountains.

The prevailing characteristic of this rock has already been explained to consist in its being almost entirely composed of amphibole and feldspath; and the object of the present chapter does not require us to enter into the detail of minute variations. Those who seek such information as we withhold, may find it abundantly in the letter-press explanations of the mineralogical plates (xi. to xv.) of the 'Description de l'Egypte.' It may, however, be proper to introduce a few particulars, which seem to us the most remarkable or important.

In one of the mountains which enclose a small oasis in the interior of the Sinai peninsula, between the valley of Feiran and the desert of Nasb, the sinaïte is superposed on beds of melaphyre.† Of this last-named species of primitive rock there are extensive banks at about three hours' march to the north of Mount Sinai.

In another part of the mountains about this desert (which seems the seat of many noticeable details) the banks of porphyry and sinaïte are surmounted by beds of ancient transition limestone. The most remarkable of these is of a fine lilac colour, very compact, of great hardness, and a crystalline texture. It contains cavities, generally round or elliptical, holding a white powder, which appears to proceed from the decomposition of small shells,

* Speaking of this phenomenon in another place, M. de Rozière remarks that it is difficult to render a reason for the existence of mountains of pudding-stone in the midst of a region entirely calcareous. The causes which have produced these masses of siliceous matter are, doubtless, the results of those grand and later catastrophes which have left multiplied traces over all the globe, and the existence of which is recognised at every step by those naturalists who have explored localities of this geological character. As to the causes, the manner in which they operated, and the means by which these incongruous masses were brought to the situations in which they are found, we have little but a large number of doubtful conjectures. We know only that these rocks are posterior to those by which they are surrounded, and that calcareous beds, now destroyed, have furnished, at least, a part of the silex of which they are composed.

† This is a black small-grained diabase, much charged with amphibole. It is strewn with crystals of grey feldspath of different sizes, and containing small irregular masses of pyrites.

though on this point our author does not feel assured. Among the primitive mountains which border on this same desert of Nasb, we also sometimes observe thick and perfectly horizontal beds of a beautiful violet sinaïte, found reposing on banks of porphyry. We have already, in the preceding chapter, mentioned the immense block which forms the summit of Mount St. Catherine. It is composed of one of the varieties of sinaïte, and is distinguished by clear colour and neat crystallization from the porphyritic and sinaïtic rocks which compose the principal mass. The monks who dwell at the foot of the mountain are thoroughly persuaded that the tables of the law which God delivered to Moses were composed of this rock. In the sinaïte of the neighbouring summit—that of Mount Sinai—the crystallization of the feldspath is more confused, the crystals of amphibole are smaller, and those of quartz are more numerous, but also smaller than in the other: mica, of which there are some traces in most of the varieties, is wanting in both of these.

Burckhardt informs us (though without strict correctness in the comparison) that the granite of this peninsula presents the same numberless varieties as that above the cataract of the Nile and near Essouan; and the same beautiful specimens of red, rose-coloured, and almost purple may be collected here as in that part of Egypt. The transition from primitive to secondary rocks, partaking of the nature of what he calls grünstein or grauwacke, or hornstein and trap, presents also an endless variety in every part of the peninsula. Masses of black trap, much resembling basalt, compose several insulated peaks and rocks. On the shore, the granite sand, carried down from the higher mountains, has been formed into cement by the action of the water, and, mixed with fragments of the other rocks, already mentioned, has become a very beautiful breccia.

The remarkably polished surface which the sinaïte in this peninsula frequently offers has been attributed to the action of minute particles of quartz, and moved over it by the winds during a long succession of ages. The alleged cause is certainly in operation, and is known to be adequate to produce the observed effect.

It is remarkable that the enormous granitic masses which stand isolated in the valleys of the upper Sinai have been observed to be not of the same kind with any of the beds in the neighbouring mountains, from which they might be supposed to have been detached. They are composed almost entirely of feldspath in very distinct red crystals, intermixed with large crystals of quartz, with the slightest possible indications of micaceous laminæ. One of the most remarkable of these detached masses is the rock said to have been that struck by Moses in Rephidim. The mica, joined, in a small quantity, to feldspath and to quartz, gives to this rock a place among the true granites. Its very abundant feldspath is of a pale red colour. Other particulars respecting the rock itself are reserved for another page.

In the region of Sinai, the granite appears with its customary companions, under various circumstances of association. Greenstone is frequent. The traveller from the mountain of Moses to the Gulf of Akabah, advances to its shore through a valley hemmed in by a chain of high and perpendicular greenstone rocks, and finds that this stone and the granite reach all the way down to the sandy beach. Towards the opposite extremities of the Ælanitic Gulf, and, in both instances, at nearly the same height above the sea-level, the greenstone is found with red porphyry and granite. Porphyry is conspicuous in other parts of this interesting region. At Tabakat very beautiful porphyry is seen with large slabs of feldspath, traversed by layers of white and rose-coloured quartz. Mountains entirely composed of porphyritic diabase are met with about a day's journey to the north of Mount Sinai. The crystals of feldspath, which appear so prominent in the prevailing porphyry, are very rare or altogether wanting in this. The prevailing colour of this mass is a greyish green, which sometimes passes into a dark green. Pyrites are disseminated in it, sometimes in considerable masses.

Epidote forms part of many of the rocks of Arabia Petræa, and is sometimes united with a feldspath white with slight streaks of red. These two substances are frequently associated in the country to the south of Mount Sinai, and principally in the environs of Ras Mohammed, which forms the point of the peninsula.

The remarks of Burckhardt upon the construction and succession of the lower ranges of primitive mountains form a very instructive sequel to the preceding statement. His observations refer, first, to the mountains which encloses Wady Sal, but admit of a more extended application. "On the top I found the rock to be granite; somewhat lower down, greenstone and porphyry began to appear; further on, granite and porphyry cease entirely; and the rock consists solely of greenstone, which, in many places, takes the nature of slate. Some of the layers of porphyry are very striking. They run perpendicularly from the very summit of the mountain to the base, in a band of about twelve feet in width, and projecting somewhat from the other rocks on the mountain's side. I had observed similar strata in Wady Genne, but running horizontally along the whole chain of mountains, and dividing it, as it were, into two equal parts. The porphyry I have met with in Sinai is usually a red indurated argillaceous substance: in some specimens it had the appearance of red feldspath. In the argill are imbedded small crystals of hornblende or of mica, and thin pieces of quartz at most two lines square. I never saw any large fragments of quartz in it. Its universal colour is red. The lower mountains of Sinai are much more regular shaped than the upper ones: they are less rugged, and have no insulated peaks, and their summits fall off in smooth curves."

One of the specimens of rock from Sinai, which make the most beautiful appearance in the plates of the 'Description de l'Egypte,' is named, by M. de Rozière, talcose quartz; and we are told that it forms very extensive beds towards the middle of the route which leads from Mount Sinai to the extremity of the peninsula. This quartz offers some slight lamellar appearances, and there are several varieties of it. Sometimes feldspath is associated with the quartz. The rocks in which the quartz most predominates divide themselves into cuneïform fragments, the greenish surfaces of which, clouded with red and yellow, are ornamented with beautiful, dark, and thickly-tufted dentrites. We do not know that we have met with any notice of simple quartz, as comprehended within the range which our inquiry embraces, except in Hasselquist, who tells us that all the stones on the shore, at the north-western extremity of the Dead Sea, were quartz of different colours and sizes, of which those pieces nearest the water's edge were incrusted with an impure salt.

The presence or absence of mica has frequently been mentioned in describing the composition of the granites of Sinai; but, excepting the thin strata of brilliantly white mica which occurs in the quartz layers of Om Shomar, as mentioned in the account of that mountain which is given in the preceding chapter, we find no notice of it, otherwise than in such composition, within the whole range of our inquiry, saving that Burckhardt found small pieces of it at the foot of the calcareous mountains on the south of the river Arnon.

Gneiss is found abundantly in every part of the Sinai peninsula; but we do not find its presence indicated by travellers in any other part of the region over which our inquiry extends.

Sandstone, which sometimes occurs with the common calcareous stone, which is the more general constituent of the mountains, as well as with the black stone of the Haouran, is very frequently met with, particularly in the eastern country, and more especially in the south. Burckhardt observes that the whole coast of Syria, from Tripoli to Beirout, appears to be formed of sand, accumulated by the prevailing westerly winds and hardened into rocks. If it were not indispensable to adhere to ascertained facts, it might be presumed that the same cause produced the same effect in, at least, some portions of the coast to the south of Tripoli. Sandstone also abounds on the shores and among the lower mountains of the Sinai peninsula. To the north-east of the higher mountains the calcareous and sand rocks succeed simultaneously to granite of the grey, small-grained species, in a valley, the bottom of which is covered with deep sand. Farther on (E.N.E.), travellers pursue their way between sandstone rocks, which present their smooth, perpendicular sides to the road. Some of them are red, others of a white colour; the ground being still deeply covered with sand. In these rocks, the traces of torrents are observable as high as three or four feet about the present level of the plain. In a barren valley, more eastward, sandstone is seen again to alternate with granite; and another valley (Wady Boszeyra), farther on, is wholly inclosed by grey granitic rocks, which the Arabs hew for mill-stones. Sandstone, red and white, forms some of the cliffs on the Sinai shore of the Gulf of Akabah. In like manner, sandstone succeeds to granite on the road leading from the upper mountains of Sinai to the Gulf of Suez, on the way to the town of that name. At the place where the granite finishes and the sandstone begins, rock salt is found among the latter. Speaking generally, we may say that a sandstone region succeeds to the primitive region of the Sinai peninsula, and separates it from the calcareous region of the north and north-east. Its ridges are of no great elevation; and where it lines the great valley (of Mokatteb), on the road to Egypt, and other transversal valleys of the peninsula, it presents long escarpments, covered with a prodigious number of those inscriptions, in different languages and characters, which engaged our attention at the end of the preceding chapter. Sandstone continues to be very common northward from Sinai, till we reach the Wady el Ahsa, near the southern extremity of the Dead Sea. The rock of that valley is chiefly composed of this stone; but to the north of that point it is met with

very rarely. One of those rare instances of its occurrence in the mountains south of the Zerka, in connection with calcareous rock and the black basaltic stone of the Haouran, has already been noticed; and in connection with the latter it is also found so far north as Jebel Heish, to the east of the lake Huleh.

In the present chapter we have, in general, enumerated the subjects which have engaged our notice in that order which the natural conditions and associations of the region examined seemed to render most expedient, without paying minute regard to, or even altogether overlooking, the principles of a scientific arrangement. Thus we first noticed limestone, as the principal characteristic of Syria, and then proceeded to the primitive or igneous rocks of Sinai, these being the two principal subjects of attention; and we have just noticed the sandstone, because it is in the third degree important, as supplying the connecting link between the limestone of Syria and the granites of Sinai. In a stricter arrangement, the black and apparently igneous rock, which figures more or less conspicuously along the whole eastern margin of the region passing under our review, should have engaged our earlier notice; but, being so irregularly connected with the local system, it seemed better to reserve it for this place, at the head, as it were, of the somewhat miscellaneous notices which will occupy the remainder of this chapter. This stone occurs so far north as El Bara, forty miles south by west from Aleppo, and extends, as we have seen, to the peninsula of Sinai. It is the principal constituent of the hilly and rocky districts eastward in the Haouran; and, in the country nearer the Jordan, through the defined extent, it occurs in masses, generally detached. Burckhardt calls this stone by various names, as tufwacke, basalt, black trap, and black stone of the Haouran. Seetzen uniformly calls it "basalt"—on which Burckhardt observes, that he rather conceives this black and heavy stone to belong to the species called tufwacke by the Germans. He adds that this stone gave occasion to the ancient opinion that there were mountains of iron on the east side of the Jordan; and even now the Arabs believe that these stones consist chiefly of iron; and travellers are often asked if they know any process by which it may be extracted. It is to be regretted that in his various geological notices he does not adhere to one denomination for this stone; so that it is not always easy to distinguish his intimations. On the upper part of the calcareous mountains which border the river Modjeb (Arnon) on the south, large blocks of it are found, of a more porous texture than in most other places. The mountain which borders, on the south, the river Zerka (Jabbok), is composed of calcareous stone, with layers of various-coloured sandstone and large blocks of this same black stone. The more northern river of Mandhour is described as flowing through a bed of tufwacke; but whether the black Haouran stone is here intended, we are unable to distinguish. This stone is sometimes exhibited in alternate layers with other strata. Thus at Szalkhat, in the Haouran, Burckhardt notes, "the hill upon which the castle stands consists of alternate layers of the common black tufwacke of the country, and of a very porous, deep red, and often rose-coloured pumice-stone. In some caverns formed of the latter, saltpetre collects in great quantities."

In the district west of the lake of Gennesareth—or on the route from Nazareth to Tooran, and, more particularly, between Cana and the latter place—"basaltic phenomena" were noticed by Dr. Clarke. The extremities of columns, prismatically formed, penetrate the surface of the soil, and render the journey rough and unpleasant. The learned traveller adds, "These marks of regular or of irregular crystallization generally denote the vicinity of a bed of water lying beneath their level .... Nothing is more frequent in the vicinity of very ancient lakes, in the bed of considerable rivers, or by the borders of the ocean. Such an appearance, therefore, in the approach to the Lake of Tiberias, is only a parallel to similar phenomena exhibited by rocks near the Lakes of Locarno and Bolsenna in Italy; by those of the Werner lake in Sweden; by the bed of the Rhine, near Cologne, in Germany; by the valley of Ronca, in the territory of Verona; by the Giant's Causeway of the Pont du Brindon in Venice; and by numerous other examples in the same country; not to enumerate instances which occur over all the islands between the north coast of Ireland and Iceland, as well as in Spain, Portugal, Arabia, and India."

On the other side of the river, at a point to the south-east of the lake, where the high eastern plain terminates at the valley of the Jordan, the cliffs are entirely basaltic. Ranges of black basaltic cliffs appear also on the western coast of the Ælanitic Gulf, in some of which the sea has worked creeks appearing like so many little lakes, with very narrow openings towards the sea, and full of fish and shells.

We have scarcely found any notices of the presence of slate, excepting about the Dead Sea. Hasselquist mentions that slate is seen in the bordering mountains, and declares it to be asphalte changed into slate; by which description we suppose it is to be regarded as bituminous shale. He also notes that there are perpendicular layers of a lamellated brown clay in the common clay of the banks, and asks, "Is this imperfect slate?" If so, as seems likely enough, there are two formations of slate going on in this neighbourhood—one from asphalte and the other from clay. The same traveller also observes that he saw "schistus,—slate resembling flint, scattered here and there on the banks." Some slight appearances of mica slate, in the primitive region of Sinai, have already been indicated.

In many places along the coast of Syria, including Palestine, the hard calcareous stone is surmounted by rocks of a soft, chalky substance, which includes a great variety of corals, shells, and other marine exuviæ. Upon the Kesrouan mountains, above Beirout, there is another curious bed, likewise of whitish stone, but of the slate kind, every flake of which enfolds a great number and variety of fishes. These, for the most part, lie exceedingly flat and compressed, like the fossil fern-plants; yet, at the same time, they are so well preserved, that the smallest fibres and lineaments of their fins, scales, and other specific distinctions, are easily distinguished. Among these are specimens of the *squilla*, which, although one of the tenderest of the crustaceous family, has not sustained the least injury from pressure or friction. Dr. Shaw, to whom we owe this information, adds, that the greater part of the mountains of Carmel, and those in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem and Bethlehem, offer the like chalky strata. In the chalky beds which surround, in some parts, the summit of Carmel, are found a great many hollow stones, lined in the inside with a variety of sparry matter, which, from some distant resemblance, are supposed by the natives to be petrified olives, melons, peaches, and other fruit. These are commonly bestowed upon pilgrims, not only as curiosities, but as antidotes against several distempers. Those which bear some likeness to the olive have been honoured with the title of *lapides judaici*, and are superstitiously regarded as a sovereign remedy against the stone and gravel, when dissolved in the juice of lemons. These supposed petrified fruits are, however, as the Doctor states, only so many different sizes of round, hollow, flint-stones, beautified within by a variety of sparry and stalagmitical knobs, which are made to pass for as many seeds and kernels.

That very marked and conspicuous feature of the coast, the White Cape,* below Tyre, derives its name from the whiteness which it owes to the chalky character we have described. Flints are, as usual, found embedded in the chalk.

Inland, there are manifestations of chalk as far north as the sources of the Jordan. Thus the mountain of Bostra is of chalk, over the surface of which pieces of feldspath of various colours are strewed. But, southward from this, we find little more of it till we come to about the parallel of the northern extremity of the Dead Sea, almost twenty miles from which, eastward, large indications of chalky strata appear. It there forms the soil of the plain, and proceeding southward, the soil is alternately chalky and flinty. In much of the early part of its course the river Arnon has worn its bed through the chalky rock. Beyond this the mountain over which the traveller from the north must pass before he reaches Kerek, is entirely composed of chalk and flint. These cretaceous indications occur occasionally in the further progress southward, and abound in, and on the approach to, the peninsula of Sinai. In one place Burckhardt speaks of the "lower chalk mountains all around the peninsula," as distinguished from the high primitive mountains of the interior, in such a manner as to intimate their frequency in the lower country and on the borders of the coast. The eastern coast of that peninsula, on the Gulf of Akabah, consists of a succession of bays, separated from one another by projecting headlands or promontories. Some of these headlands are of chalk. Burckhardt mentions one (Abou Burko) which he was an hour in doubling, as he travelled along the beach, and which was entirely a chalky rock, whose base was washed by the sea. This traveller first arrived at the sea-side, about eighteen miles to the south of this point, and there he observes that the grünstein and granite rocks reach all the way down to the sandy beach; but, at the very foot of the mountain, a thin layer of chalk appears just above the ground. On approaching this part of the coast from the interior, he had to pass through a valley of deep sand covered with blocks of chalk rock. Similar indications are afforded on the opposite side of this peninsula, towards the Gulf of Suez, as well as in the level soil of the desert which occupies its northern part. Thus the hills which enclose the barren

* The Album Promontorium of the ancients, now called Ras el Abaid; both names having the same signification.

valley of Wady Amara,* consist of chalk and silex in irregular strata—the silex sometimes quite black, at other times taking a lustre and transparency much resembling agate. In the northward desert, the present name of which (El Tyh) commemorates the "wanderings" of the children of Israel therein, low hills of chalk occur, as well as frequent tracts of chalky soil, for the most part overspread with flints.

Indeed, flints abound in nearly all the plains and valleys through which the Hebrew host marched during the forty years which passed away, from the time that they departed from the land of Egypt until they encamped in the plains of Moab, before crossing the river Jordan. The preceding notice of the chalky districts also serves to indicate the localities of flint; for here, of course, as elsewhere, chalk and flint occur in constant connection. The flinty nodules are, however, not confined to the chalky tracts, but appear also in sandy plains and valleys. The presence of siliceous strata in the chalk hills of Sinai has just been noticed.

We have, on more than one occasion, mentioned the chains of hills which bound, on the east and west, the great valley that extends from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Akabah. The western hills were crossed by Burckhardt at a point about thirty-five miles from the head of the gulf, where he observes,—the chain "is intersected by numerous broad wadys, in which the talk-tree grows: the rock is entirely siliceous, of the same species as that of the desert which extends from hence to Suez. I saw some large pieces of flint perfectly oval, three to four feet in length, and about a foot and a half in breadth." Passing these hills, the western desert presents to the traveller's view its immense expanse of dreary country, covered with black flints, with here and there some hilly chains rising from the plain. It is a remarkable circumstance that the presence of loose flints in this very desert is noticed, incidentally, in the Scriptural account of the journey of Moses from the land of Midian to Egypt.

"Coal" is a word which sometimes occurs in our translation of the Bible; but it must always be understood to denote charcoal, as distinguished from raw wood for fuel. The ancients, including the Hebrews, if they knew the combustible properties of mineral coal, never appear to have thought of using it for fuel; nor do the Orientals use it to this day. Indications of coal are exhibited in various parts of the Lebanon mountains. Here and there a narrow seam of this mineral protrudes through the superincumbent strata to the surface; and we learn from Mr. Elliot that the enterprise of Mohammed Ali did not suffer even this source of natural wealth to escape his notice. At Cornale, eight hours east from Beirout, and two thousand five hundred feet above the level of the sea, where the coal-seams are three feet in thickness, Mr. Brettel, an English engineer, was employed, under his orders, in excavating the coal, which proved to be of a good quality, and mixed with iron pyrites in large quantities. It was now transported to the sea-coast on mules; but to obviate the expenses of this mode of carriage it was said to be in contemplation to make a railroad to convey it to Beirout, and there to establish a depôt. What has become of these operations since Mohammed Ali lost possession of Syria does not appear.

The lately preceding notice of the cretaceous formations of this country have given occasion for the mention of various petrifactions which they contained. We now proceed to register such facts, relating to petrifactions, as have not thus been anticipated. The whole subject has been much neglected by travellers, or attended to so slightly, that even those who do make some reference to it, rarely state to what species the organized remains belong. We have little to add respecting the petrified matters found on the Mediterranean coast. Volney, indeed, mentions a quarry of schisteous stone in the Kesraoun, at a little distance from the sea, between Batroun and Jebail—the flakes of which bear the impression of plants, fishes, shells, and especially the sea-onion. They seem, as we have already intimated, to be most abundant about the seaward bases of the Kesraoun and Lebanon mountains, and particularly in places to the north of Beirout. At the base of that range of Lebanon mountains to the north-east of Tripoli, which bears the name of Jebel Turbul, and near the fountain of Bedoowee, are found numerous stones, white and soft, but compact and moderately heavy; and when these are opened they exhibit the impressions, and even the skeletons, of different sorts of fishes. D'Arvieux opened several pieces, and in some he found most perfect and delicate skeletons of fishes, exhibiting the head, the body, the tail, the fins, entire in the finest parts; and the whole easily separable from the substance in which they were entombed; while the rest, without the least trace of the bones, offered impressions of the same parts as clear and perfect as if graven with the burin. Mr. Elliot, also, procured from the village of Hakil, four miles to the north-east of Jebaile, and from Boobda two hours south-east of Beirout, some beautiful spars and fossil shell-fish, with a box full of fish embedded in lime, like those found at Lyme Regis, on the coast of Dorsetshire. Volney says that he never saw, or heard it said, that there were petrified shells in the higher regions of Lebanon: nor do we find any notice of such; unless it be that Burckhardt, in ascending to the higher summits, found a small petrified shell, and discovered a similar petrifaction on breaking a stone, which he picked up on the very summit, before descending to the cedars.

We are also informed by Volney that the bed of the torrent at Ascalon is lined with a heavy stone, porous and salt, which contains a great number of small volutes and bivalves of the Mediterranean. Pococke found a large quantity of them in the rocks which border on the Dead Sea. The quantity of shells in various states around this lake, but not near its waters, seems indeed to be very remarkable. Not to mention the myriads of small unpetrified shells which are strewn over the plain at its northern extremity, it may be observed that the calcareous mountains which are near Kerek, to the east from the southern extremity of the Asphaltic lake, abound in petrified shells; and some of the rocks consist entirely of small shells. Such shells are also found in great numbers in the ascent, southward, from the deep valley of the river Arnon (now Modjeb) to the high plains.

In the far southward prolongation of the same line, that is, on the Sinai shore of the Ælanitic Gulf, shells are found in precisely similar combinations. The largest plain on this coast is that between Sherm and Nakb, towards the extremity of the peninsula. The whole of this plain appears to be alluvial; and many petrified shells are found embedded in the chalky and calcareous soil. Alluvial deposits, in a state more fresh and recent, are found in an opposite quarter of the peninsula, that is, in the desert somewhat to the north by east of the present head of the Gulf of Suez. Here Burckhardt notes, "The plain was covered with a saline crust, and we crossed a tract of ground about five minutes in breadth, covered with such a quantity of small white shells that it appeared at a distance like a strip of salt. Shells of the same species are found on the shores of the lake of Tiberias. Once, probably, the sea covered the whole of this ground." We notice this here, as every geological or other indication of alteration at the head of the Gulf of Suez is of high importance in regard to the passage of the Hebrew host through its waters.

There are many traces of fossil shells on the eastern borders of the Red Sea; and they are nearly all such as still exist in the sea itself. Several hours' journey to the south of Suez, there are extensive beds composed principally of the large shell, known to naturalists by the name of *camu cigas*. The beds in which it is found are elevated several feet above the edge of the sea, embedded in a fine calcareous gravel, the particles of which had acquired a certain degree of adhesion. On the same coast, in the route from the bay of Ghurundel to the thermal fountains of Faroun, and at the height of one hundred and fifty feet above the water-mark, quantities of two species of echinite are found reposing on a bed of compact limestone, with which, however, they are not in adhesion. It would seem that they were formerly retained in some friable bed which has been destroyed,—the usual cause of the isolation of echinites.

The promontory which detaches itself from the point of the peninsula to form the port of Ras Mohammed, where sometimes the vessels anchor which come from Mocha and Yemen, is a rock formed of petrified madrepores; some parts of which have, however, still preserved their natural state. Even in the parts which are completely petrified, it is often easy to distinguish the tissue of the madrepores of which they are formed, although their cells are filled with calcareous infiltrations.

In the deserts bordering on the Isthmus of Suez, and particularly in those parts where the hills are of friable strata, the soil is principally of a quartzose gravel, produced by their detrition. In this gravelly soil, which envelopes the foot of the mountain, are found many fragments, and even entire trunks, of petrified trees, of upwards of ten or twelve feet in length. It is readily perceived that these trees belong to different species; but the palm-tree and the *seyal*, or desert acacia, alone can be identified; all the others offering, in their petrified state, characteristics too equivocal to allow their species to be determined. The perfect preservation and the size of the petrified trunks, thus found enveloped in the sands, not embedded in or forming part of any rocks, as well as various other circumstances enumerated by M. de Rozière, appear very clearly

* Probably the *Marah* of the Hebrew pilgrimage.

to intimate that they were not brought from any distance, but that they pre-existed, and were entire on the arrival of the petrifying influence in the place where they grew. That these trees were produced in the desert posterior to the formation of mountains of pudding-stone, is not in itself very likely; for in these countries, where vegetation is so rare, it is only in deep valleys, or in places which are rendered, by the disposition of the surrounding soil, the receptacles of water, that we now find any living trees; and no doubt it has been the same in all ages. With respect to the acacia, it should be observed that it still grows in the deserts adjoining and forming the Isthmus of Suez, where petrified specimens of its wood very frequently occur. Among the other petrified specimens, some appear to be those of the aloe and sycamore; but on this point, and from the causes we have stated, no certainty is realised.

Palestine is abundantly supplied with salt from the shores of the Dead Sea and of the Mediterranean. Remembering that Moses describes the borders of the Dead Sea as a land of "*salt* and burning," attention is naturally turned to that quarter in the first instance. The intense saltness of the water of that lake has been supposed to proceed from strata or masses of rock-salt within its basin. This conjecture, as far as regards the bottom of the lake, cannot of course be verified. But there are indications on the shore by which it is favoured. Captains Irby and Mangles found several large fragments of rock-salt on the plain southward of the lake; and being led by this to examine the hill to the right of the ravine by which they had descended to the shore, they found it to be composed partly of salt, and partly of hardened sand. The salt was seen in many places to be hanging from the cliffs in clear perpendicular points, resembling icicles. Strata of salt of considerable thickness were observed, mixed with very little sand, and generally in perpendicular lines. There were also appearances which seemed to indicate that, during the rainy season, the torrents bring down immense masses of the mineral. Altogether, that which the travellers here witnessed seemed, to their minds, to divest of improbability the account of Strabo, who states that, to the south of the Dead Sea, there were towns and villages built entirely of salt.

Strata of rock-salt are also found southward, in the desert of El Tyh, and, still more to the south, even in the valleys of Sinai. In several parts of the road through the former the traveller observes holes out of which rock-salt has been dug; and in the cliffs which bound some of the latter, rock-salt is seen among the sandstone. In this last neighbourhood it is also obtained by excavation. It is white, and perfectly clean: "They showed us some," says Lord Lindsay, "fit for the table of an emperor."

Salt is abundantly deposited by the waters of the Dead Sea. The water encroaches more or less upon the shore according to the season, and dries off into small shallows and small pools, which in the end deposit a salt as fine and as well bleached as that of regular salt-pans. A solid saline surface, sometimes several inches thick, is often thus formed. So much of this salt as the market requires is collected and taken away on the backs of asses. Irby and Mangles saw several persons thus employed. The briny waters of this lake leave a saline crust on whatever they receive or cover; the drift wood is so impregnated with salt that it cannot be made to burn; the loose stones on the shore become covered, as in the salt-pans, with a calcareous and gypseous incrustation; and the crumbly clay of the shore is also deeply impregnated with salt.

Sea-salt may of course be obtained by the proper measures, on the Mediterranean coast; and it appears that this source of supply was not in ancient times neglected. The rocks, in several places along the shore, were hollowed into a great number of troughs, two or three yards long, and of a proportionate breadth; intended originally for as many salt-pans, where by continually throwing in the sea-water to evaporate, a large quantity of salt would be gradually concreted. In most cases now, however, the rocks, notwithstanding their hardness, have in the course of ages been so worn down by the waves, that the bottoms of the pits are scarcely below the general level. Salt is also spontaneously deposited in proper situations. Some of the people with Rauwolff collected near Zib (Achzib) as much as filled a large sack, while others were employed in catching fish and seeking oysters. As the salt-pans mentioned were exclusively found on the coast of Phœnicia and Syria, and not on those of the proper Jewish territory, we may perhaps collect that the Hebrews were sufficiently supplied with salt from the Dead Sea. (¹)

Saltpetre is produced abundantly in the eastern country of the Haouran, particularly in and about the Ledja. It is found in the caverns of those rocks of "black tufwacke" which have been so often mentioned in the notices of this part of the country. All the houses of the Haouran—the greater part of which are of ancient date—are built with this stone; and in the earth dug up among their ruins saltpetre is abundantly found. The saline earth from which it is extracted is also found in the open plains, to the productive spots in which the people are guided by the appearance of the ground in the morning before sunrise. Wherever the surface then appears the most wet with dew, the soil is found to be impregnated with the salt. It will be recollected that Captains Irby and Mangles also found lumps of nitre on the south-east shore of the Dead Sea.

The existence of natron, or carbonate of soda, is not confined to the deserts on the west of Egypt. On the eastern border of the Red Sea some traces of it may be found in the tepid waters of the Fountains of Moses, and in the hot waters of Hammam Faroun, and some efflorescences of natron may be found at Tor, and in the vicinity of Sherm: but we do not find it accumulated in any considerable quantities; but only such traces of it as these, in places where the calcareous soil has been impregnated with marine salt. The interior of the deserts, in the northern part of Sinai, towards Egypt on the one hand, and towards Palestine on the other, offers here and there, after rains, slight efflorescences of natron intermixed with marine salt.

In declaring to the Israelites the benefits and rich endowments of that Promised Land of which they were about to take possession, their great leader informed them that it was "a land whose stones were iron, and out of whose hills they might dig copper."* And that such proved to be the case may be inferred from the frequent mention of these metals in the history of the Jews, and the abundance in which they appear to have been possessed. But in the later condition of the country, in which, for ages, the treasures hid in the earth have not been sought after, but little information concerning its metals can be expected.

Volney assumed the existence of iron in Judea, and knew that it abounded in Lebanon. It is indeed, he says, the only metal which is found abundantly in those mountains. The mountains of Kesrouan and of the Druses are full of it; and, every summer, some mines, which were simply ochreous, continued, in his time, to be worked by the inhabitants. Burckhardt also mentions the iron of Shouair in the Kesrouan, and adds the curious fact that, as the place of the mines affords no fuel, the iron ore is carried, on the backs of mules and asses, one day's journey and a half to the smelting furnaces at Nabae el Mouradj, where the mountains abound in oak. There is no doubt that iron works were anciently carried on in this quarter very much in the same fashion, as large quantities of scoria are occasionally discovered at a distance from the mines, and generally near forests of evergreen oak, the wood of which was probably used for smelting. This is, probably, more from ignorance of the presence or use of coal, than from any preference of wood; but it is now well known that the ore prepared with wood is superior to that subjected to coal fires, because the metal becomes partially carbonated, and is therefore with less difficulty converted into steel, a purer carbonate of iron; and that it is this use of wood rather than coal which renders the Swedish iron so much more valuable than any other. It appears that the discovery of coal in Lebanon was expected to operate importantly on the production of iron in the mountain, as the government contemplated turning the discovery to account by the erection of a furnace for smelting the ore.

Mr. Buckingham, crossing Lebanon from Tripoli to Baalbec, went over a mountain called Jebel Ainneto, which is composed of white limestone of different qualities, and exhibits, in parts, streaks or layers of red, as if coloured by the oxide of iron, or some other metal. In the valley below this mountain he observed several masses of a deep brown purplish rock, and was informed that this was the stone from which iron was procured, and that there was a mine still worked a few hours' journey to the south.

We do not know that any travellers have noticed the presence of iron in Palestine west of the Jordan; but so few travellers have been in the habit of attending to such matters, that their silence concerning this or any other mineralogical product, scarcely supplies even a negative argument against its existence. Josephus mentions a mountain called the Iron Mountain, on the other side Jordan; and, from his indication of the locality, it appears to have been one of those which bound the valley of the Jordan on that side, somewhere not greatly to the north of the Dead Sea. In a corresponding situation Mr. Buckingham appears to have found this mountain, and to have ascertained the cause of the name it bore. Crossing the Jordan about nine miles above the Dead Sea, and then journey-

* Deut. viii. 9.

ing in a north-east direction, the first range of hills was found to be generally of white limestone; but the second had a mixture of many other kinds of rock; among these was a dark red stone, which broke easily, and had shining metallic particles in it, like those of iron ore.

Iron is catalogued among the metals wrought, long before the Deluge, by Tubal-Cain; and this just suffices to show that it was known very early. But in practical use, copper is known to have been employed much earlier, and long to have been in more general use, even for purposes (such as arms, tools, and instruments) to which no one thinks of applying that metal now. The priority of use is claimed also by gold and silver,—metals which, with copper, are, as Robertson observes, "found in their perfect state in the clefts of rocks, in the sides of mountains, or the channels of rivers. They were accordingly first known, and first applied to use. But iron, the most serviceable of all, and to which man is most indebted, is never discovered in its perfect form; its gross and stubborn ore must feel twice the force of fire, and go through two laborious processes, before it becomes fit for use. Man was long acquainted with the other metals before he acquired the art of fabricating iron, or attained such ingenuity as to perfect an invention to which he is indebted for those instruments wherewith he subdues the earth and commands its inhabitants."

An inquiry into the state of the metallurgic arts among the Hebrews does not belong to this place. It may suffice here to observe that besides the slight intimation respecting Tubal-Cain, which we have already mentioned, there is no mention of iron in the Pentateuch until after the departure of the Israelites from Egypt. But Job, whose history evidently belongs to patriarchal times, speaks of iron on more than one occasion, alluding to it as "dug out of the earth," and as proverbial for its strength. The Egyptians were celebrated for their skill in extracting various metallic ores from the mines between the Nile and the Red Sea, and for the fabrication of metals: and there is evidence that the Hebrews picked up a fair degree of knowledge of the latter branch of the art, while among that people; but it appears to us that it was long after they became a nation before they sought for metals in their own soil or were able to extract them when found. They seem long to have obtained from Egypt, on the one hand, or from Phœnicia on the other, such articles of metal as they required ready made, or the metal for making them in a state fit for use. It is remarkable that iron is not once mentioned among the materials employed in the construction of the tabernacle, or of the many utensils belonging to it for which that metal may seem to have been very suitable. And although David laid up "iron in abundance" for the service of the temple to be built by his son, the account of the actual construction does not inform us how the metal was employed. When the Israelites defeated the Midianites, iron occurs among the spoil obtained by the conquerors, and is, with the more precious metals, directed to be purified (from its ceremonial uncleanness) by being passed through the fire. Upon the whole, it seems doubtful that the Hebrews ever worked the mines of their own country to any important extent, if at all; and although iron may, in latter times, have been plentifully in use among them as compared with other metals, such plenty would be scarcity, and is so even now in Western Asia, compared with the abundance in which this metal is possessed by ourselves.

Of copper we can find no information. Volney, indeed, heard a vague report that there was anciently a copper-mine near Aleppo, but which must long since have been abandoned. This, besides, was far beyond the limits of Palestine. The ancient application of this metal to all purposes for which iron is now employed has been noticed in the preceding paragraphs; and this went so far, that even tools for cutting stone were made with this metal hardened by an alloy of tin. But the ancient uses of copper is an antiquarian and not a geographical subject; and we shall therefore only remark, that although Moses expressly tells of the existence of copper (not "brass," which is a factitious metal) in the Holy Land, the metal appears to have been principally obtained from the Egyptians and Phœnicians, both of whom had it abundantly—the former from mines and the latter by traffic. The Jews were certainly not a people to take the trouble of seeking in the bowels of the earth for that which they could obtain, easily and cheaply, in exchange for the produce of their fields and flocks. The Phœnicians were particularly noted for their manufactures in this metal, as appears even from the Bible; and Ezekiel intimates that, at least, a portion of their supply was brought from the neighbourhood of the Black Sea.

As we have mentioned the use of tin in alloying copper, we may properly add that although tin is not found in the Holy Land, the use of it was known to the Hebrews very early; for we find it mentioned among the spoils which they won from the Midianites before they entered the Land of Promise. From what source it came at this early date, unless from India, it is not easy to discover; but ultimately our own islands furnished the chief supply to the Phœnicians. The prophets more than once allude to its use in alloying more precious metals.

Lead is also mentioned on the occasion to which we have just adverted; but it had previously been mentioned by the patriarch Job as a substance on which writings were graven. And if he lived in the land of Edom, he was not very far from one of the sources from which this metal might be supplied; for lead is said to exist at a place called Sheff, near Mount Sinai. Another source of supply is indicated in the recent discovery, by Mr. Burton, of ancient lead-mines, in some of which the ore has been exhausted by working, in the mountains between the Red Sea and the Nile. We have not found any notice of this metal within the proper limits of Palestine.

No traveller in Palestine makes any mention of gold, except Dr. Clarke. At the lake of Tiberias he takes occasion to observe,—"Native gold was found here formerly. We noticed an appearance of the kind, but, on account of its trivial nature, neglected to pay proper attention to it, notwithstanding the hints given by more than one writer upon the subject." We believe, however, that, for every practical purpose, it may be said that Palestine has no gold. It is always spoken of by the Jewish writers as a foreign product. As gold was very common, relatively, in Egypt, where extensive mines of it were worked at a very early date, much of that in the hands of the Hebrews was probably obtained from thence. In fact, the first gold of which we read, historically, was obtained from the Egyptians. But the supplies obtainable from this source became ultimately inadequate to the demand; and Solomon and some of his successors obtained larger quantities from southernmost Arabia, the east of Africa, and the coasts of other countries bordering the Indian Ocean and Red Sea.

The Scriptures do not mention that Palestine afforded any silver; yet some traces of that metal appear to have been found. When Volney was among the Druses, it was mentioned to him that an ore affording silver and lead had been discovered on the declivity of a hill in Lebanon; but, as such a discovery would have ruined the whole district by attracting the attention of the Turks, much haste was made to destroy all appearance of its existence. It is observable that of the four principal metals—gold, silver, iron and copper—silver is by much the latest which is mentioned. It is not noticed in Genesis during the period before the Deluge; and after that event, it does not occur in the account of Abraham's visit to Egypt, nor until the same patriarch's purchase of a burial ground for his family, for which he paid in silver. Thus, although so comparatively late to be noticed, it must then long have been known and in use, it having already become a medium of exchange and a standard by which value was estimated. Whence the Jews got their principal supplies of silver is not very clear, unless from the Phœnicians. This metal might be obtained in some quantities, one would think, from the lead-mines of Egypt, if there were no proper mines of silver; and the Hebrews appear to have been in possession of a great deal of it when they were in the desert after leaving their country. Yet it is thought that silver was scarce in that country—Belzoni says, scarcer than gold—and the rarity of the colour of silver in the paintings of utensils and ornaments, and of the actual metal in the numerous articles which have been found, affords much sanction to this conclusion.

The neighbourhood of Hasbeya, near the sources of the Jordan, is noted for its mines of asphaltum. Burckhardt was told by a priest that in this same neighbourhood a metal was found, of which no one knew the name or made any use. Accordingly, on digging about, the traveller found several small pieces of a metallic substance, which he took to be a native amalgam of mercury. According to the description given him, cinnabar is also found there: but, after digging for an hour, no specimens of it were found.

It is not in the nature of things that we should have any information concerning precious stones found in Palestine. The treasures of the earth are not now in that unhappy country sought after by any; so much otherwise, indeed, that any trace of their existence, incidentally brought to the notice of the inhabitants, is studiously obliterated or concealed. If any of the more precious stones are found, it must often happen that they are not heeded, or their value recognised, in the natural state, by the finder. And, from their general proceeding in such matters, we know that any one who might find a precious jewel, the value of which he knew, would be most careful to conceal the fortune which had befallen him, lest its disclosure should bring utter ruin upon him-

self and his house. Almost every kind of precious stone is mentioned in the Scriptures, although there is no passage which intimates that they were of native produce. But from the mineralogical character of the country, it would not be unreasonable to expect that it should afford such stones as the topaz, the emerald, the chrysoberyl, rock crystals, and some of the finer jaspers. Pliny mentions a species of amethyst which was found southward in Paran, whence it took the name of Paranites.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.

(1) Saltpetre in old Houses, p. 434.—In one of the notes of the 'Pictorial Bible' (Lev. xiv. 34), it has been supposed that the "house-leprosy," concerning which various minute regulations were made by Moses, consisted in a deposit of saltpetre upon the walls. It may, perhaps, be taken as an interesting corroboration of this view, that the houses beyond Jordan, where the law on this subject was delivered, were, from the character of the soil on which they stood, or from the nature of the stone with which they were built, particularly liable to this visitation. Assuming the explanation in the 'Pictorial Bible' to be correct, it seems most interesting, at this distance of time, to find in the actual state of the habitations of this region, a satisfactory and unexpected reason for so peculiar a set of minute regulations.

Saltpetre for use is collected as well from the old houses as from the other sources indicated in the text. Burckhardt's account is this:—"The earth in which the saltpetre is found is collected in great quantities in the ruined houses, and thrown into large wooden vessels perforated with small holes on one side near the bottom. Water is then poured in, which drains through the holes into a lower vessel, from whence it is taken and poured into large copper kettles: after boiling in these for twenty-four hours it is left in the open air, when the sides of the vessels become covered with crystals, which are afterwards washed to free them from all impurities." It appears that, by this process, 100 pounds of the saline earth yield one and a half of saltpetre. The production is so abundant, that one person engaged in the manufacture, informed Burckhardt that he alone, on his own account, sent 100 cwt. of saltpetre to Damascus every year. From this and the other sources of supply in the same districts, all Syria is furnished with the article. At no greater distance than the lake of Tiberias, our traveller saw it sold at double the price for which it might be obtained on the spot.

CHAPTER III.—VOLCANIC INDICATIONS AND EARTHQUAKES.

In the country which we are now describing, the traces of volcanic action are abundant; but are nearly confined to the basin and inclosing hills of the Jordan and its lakes. "The bituminous and sulphureous sources of the Lake Asphaltitis," says Volney, "the lava, the pumice-stones thrown upon its banks, and the hot-baths of Tiberias, demonstrate that the valley has been subject to volcanic eruptions, and the seat of a subterraneous fire which is not yet extinguished. Clouds of smoke are often observed to issue from the lake, and new crevices to be formed upon its shore." The same writer elsewhere says that the lake of Tiberias, as viewed from Mount Tabor, looks as if enclosed in the crater of a volcano, and other travellers allow the fitness of this comparison.[1]

The hot-springs thus alluded to, as affording evidence of still existing means which it pleased God in former times to employ in producing effects which are still very apparent, are found on the western shore of the lake of Tiberias, to the north and south of the town which bears the same name. The most important of them rises at the base of a mountain about half a mile south of the town, and a pistol-shot distant from the margin of the lake. Hasselquist describes the stream as equal in diameter to a man's arm, where it issues from the mountain. "The water is so hot," he continues, "that the hand may be put into it without scalding, but it cannot be kept there long; consequently it is not boiling hot, but the next degree to it. It has a strong sulphureous smell. It tastes bitter, and somewhat like common salt. The sediment deposited by the water is black, as thick as paste, smells strong as sulphur, and is covered with two skins or cuticles, of which that beneath is of a fine dark-green colour, and the uppermost of a light rusty colour; at the mouth, where the water formed little cascades over the stones, the first-mentioned cuticle alone was found, and so much resembled a *conferva*, that one might easily have taken this, which really belongs to the mineral kingdom, for a vegetable production; but nearer the river, where the water stood still, one might see both skins, the yellow uppermost, and under it the green." According to Robinson, the water runs from the bath in a strong sulphureous stream into the lake, leaving a yellow incrustation upon the stones over which it passes. The temperature of the water has been ascertained to be 144° Fahrenheit. There is here an old bathing-house now in ruins, though baths for the common people are still kept up in it. A new building was erected a few rods to the north, by Ibrahim Pasha; it was commenced in 1833, and is regarded in the country as a splendid edifice.

The spring which we have described is not the only one of the kind in this neighbourhood. There are several others, all rising near to the edge of the lake, and all equally hot, finely transparent, and slightly sulphureous, resembling extremely the spring already described. All these are in the same neighbourhood, which from them takes the name of El Hamam, the generic name for baths, corresponding, in sound and signification, to that of Emmaus, which it anciently bore.

About two miles and a half to the north of Tiberias are the ruins of what Irby and Mangles call "six Roman baths" of mineral water, but only of a lukewarm temperature (80° Fahrenheit). The baths are circular (from 15 to 20 feet in diameter), enclosed with a wall about 12 feet high within, and six without; and having at present no apparent means of ingress or egress. The spot where they now are is very picturesque, being close to the lake and overgrown with shrubs, weeds, and wild flowers. The water is very clear, about six or seven feet deep, with pebbles at the bottom, and fish sporting about. The spring discharges itself into the lake subterraneously through the wall. The obvious purpose of the constructions around these fountains was to raise and retain the water at a considerable height above the fountain, but whether it was thus raised for bathing or for other uses, Dr. Robinson thinks it difficult to decide.

Still continuing our journey northward, we come, at about seven miles from Tiberias, to a small village called Ain et Tabighah, where there is a very copious stream bursting forth from immense fountains, slightly warm, but so brackish as not to be drinkable. The stream drives one or two mills, and double the same quantity of water runs to waste.

The hot-springs at Om Keis, to which comparative allusions have here been made, belong also to the basin of the Lake of Tiberias, in an opposite quarter to those already described, being about three miles east by south from its southern extremity, and on the northern bank of the river Jarmouk,* Om Keis being opposite to it, to the south of the same river. The springs at this spot, and the other indications which it offers, may be considered as completing a chain of volcanic exhibitions around the lake of Tiberias. Crossing the river at this place, Mr. Buckingham found a black soil with some little cultivation; and a few yards up from the stream, on the north-western side, came to the ruins of a Roman building enveloped in the steam of the springs on which it stood. On approaching nearer, this edifice was found to be an extensive and complete ancient bath in tolerable preservation. He proceeds:—"The springs which rose here presented to us a deep and capacious basin of beautifully transparent water, of the colour of those precious stones called aquamarines, and more purely crystal-like than any fountain I had ever beheld. It rose in bubbles from the bottom; but though deeper than the height of a man, a pin might have been distinguished at the bottom, or the inscription of a medal read, so unusually clear was the whole mass. The odour emitted in its steam was highly sulphurous, but its taste was considerably less so. Its heat at the fountain-head was such as to render it painful to the hand, if immersed beyond a few seconds; but a fact, for which we could not account, was, that at a few yards distant from its source it was sensibly hotter. From the fine transparent green of its central and deepest parts, the shade grew lighter as it approached the edges; and around the immediate rim of its natural basin, as well as on a little cataract formed by fallen masses of the ruined bath, the water had deposited a coating of the purest white, which gave an additional beauty to the appearance of the whole. The quantity of the water and the force of its stream were sufficient to turn the largest mill: and it made a sensible addition to the waters of the Hieromax, where it joined that river only a few yards below."

It appears from this traveller's further account, that by gradual immersion the heat of the water can be borne. Though the Roman edifice is a ruin, and no modern convenience supplies its place, the healing virtues of the spring are held in high reputation among the Arabs; and those who have sought benefit from its waters rarely depart without leaving in front of the southern wall some humble votive offering in the shape of hair, nails, teeth, and old rags of every kind and colour. The day following, the same traveller crossed the river at a lower point, and observed here that the dark masses of rock, over which it wound its course, resembled a stream of cooled lava, when contrasted with the lighter soil by which it was edged on both sides. The stones of its bed here were equally porous with those seen above; the ground also showed patches of sulphur in many places, and "we were of opinion," continues Mr. Buckingham, "that the hot springs we had visited yesterday, the lakes of Cæsarea and Tiberias, the stone already described, the sulphureous and infertile nature of the plain of Jericho in many parts, and the whole phenomena observed of the Dead Sea, were sufficient indications of a volcanic effect, perhaps on the whole range of the long valley, from near the sources of the Jordan to beyond the point of its issue in the great asphaltic lake."

In a district, the volcanic character of which is indicated by such hot-springs as those which we have described, we may expect similar manifestations in the mountains among or near which they occur. Such are accordingly afforded. Speaking of the mountain at whose base the only hot spring which *he* knew—that nearest to Tiberias—rises, Hasselquist says, that it consists of "a black and

* Jarmouk, Hieromax, and Sheiraf el Mandhour, are the Jewish, classical, and modern names of the same river.

brittle sulphureous stone, which is only to be found in large masses in the neighbourhood of Tiberias; but occurs in loose stones also on the coasts of the Dead Sea, as well as here at the Lake Gennesareth." Elsewhere, he says that the same stone of which the Tiberian mountains consist begins in the plain of Esdraelon. This stone is doubtless the same which Buckingham mentions in describing the hot springs near Om Keis, and that in such a manner as, in connection with Burckhardt's intimations, abundantly proves that it exists around the lake, and in the eastern country, far more extensively than Hasselquist could know. After mentioning the ruins of the Roman bath at the Hieromax, Mr. Buckingham notices that "the whole of the edifice was constructed of the black stone *of which we had lately seen so much*, and which appeared to us to be volcanic; and we could now perceive that the cliffs above, through which the Hieromax makes it way, as well as on the upper part of *the opposite hills*, this stone formed a deep layer on a basis of white stone, almost like chalk. The whole bed of the river was one singular mixture of these black rocks, worn smooth and round by the passage of the water, but still as porous as pumice-stone, and equal masses of the white stone, which was nearly as hard, but of smoother surface." He subsequently tells us that he met with the same "black porous stone" in the plain approaching Tiberias from Nazareth, thus unintentionally enabling us to identify it with that which is the subject of Hasselquist's observation.

The porous stone so much mentioned in the preceding statement is distinctly called *lava* by Maddox, as it is also by Mr. Calman, in his account of the earthquake of 1837; and the testimony of the latter, while it is entitled to particular respect, as that of an eminently pious man and a missionary, evinces more clearly than any other single statement, the volcanic character of this region. It was here that the earthquake just mentioned exhibited its utmost violence; and Mr. Calman, in his account of that awful visitation, is led thus to describe the natural characteristics which the country previously exhibited:—

"It may not be uninteresting to give some description of the appearance of the country which has suffered most, namely, about Gish, Safed, Tabereah, and Lubiah. All these neighbourhoods abound with lava. With the exception of Safed, the buildings in all are composed of that material. Two places bear every mark of extinguished volcanoes. One is situated in the elevated plain half-way between Gish and Safed. At this season of the year its appearance is that of a small lake, being about a mile in diameter, perfectly circular, and filled with water, having round its edges an accumulation of lava to the height of many feet. The plain is covered with the same stone; they gradually diminish as one approaches Safed, and are no longer seen from that neighbourhood till near the lake of Tiberias, two hours to the south of the former place. Here again the mountains, which evidently once formed the boundary of the lake, are covered with lava, or rather in some cases composed of it. There is indeed a fertile plain, from one to two hours in width intervening between these mountains and the lake; but this is evidently alluvial, and the lava accordingly makes its appearance in the bed of the lake itself."

Pursuing our way southward, along the course of the Jordan, we do not meet with any marked volcanic indications till we arrive in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea. The eastern border of that lake, towards its northern extremity, offers the only other hot-springs which we shall be required to notice. We are quite sensible that we should have no right to regard hot springs in themselves as volcanic indications. But their character as such is indisputable when they exist in close association with other and less disputable volcanic exhibitions. Such exhibitions may be found, in the country under our view, without the presence of hot-springs; but the springs are nowhere to be found apart from such other indications. We have therefore given to them their proper place.

The springs to which we have just alluded occur in the ravine through which flows the rivulet of Zerka Mayn. Their direct distance east from the Dead Sea may be about three miles; but by the course of the ravine at least a mile more. We are indebted for the first modern account of these springs to the interesting 'Travels' of Captains Irby and Mangles, who hearing of them on their journey from Kerek to Szalt, made an excursion to view them. On looking down the valley into which these springs flow, it was found to present some grand and romantic features. The rocks vary between red, grey, and *black*, and have a bold and imposing appearance. The whole bottom is filled, and, in a manner, choked with a crowded thicket of canes and aspines of different species, intermixed with the palm, which is also seen rising in tufts in the recesses of the mountain sides, and in every place whence the springs issue. In one place a considerable stream of hot water is seen precipitating itself from a high and perpendicular shelf of rock, which is strongly tinted with the brilliant yellow of sulphur deposited upon it. On reaching the bottom of the valley, the travellers found themselves in what might be termed the bed of a hot river, so copious and rapid was it, and its heat so little abated. This heat of the stream continues as it passes downward, from its receiving constant supplies of water of the same elevated temperature. In order to visit these sources in succession, they passed over to the right (northern) bank, and, ascending the mountain side, passed four abundant sources, all within the distance of half a mile, and discharging themselves into the stream at right angles with its course. The travellers had no thermometer, but the degree of heat in the water seemed very great; near the source it scalds the hand, which cannot be kept in it for the space of half a minute. The deposit of sulphur is very great; but the water is tasteless to the palate.

There are two places of hot springs on the eastern side of the Dead Sea. Thus in the valley of Beni-Hammad (which Burckhardt conjectures to be "the valley of Zared" of Num. xxi. 12) such wells are found, with some ruined buildings near them. And, still more to the south, the valley of the stream El Ahsa, which enters, from the south-east, the southern back-water of the Dead Sea, not only offers masses of volcanic rock, but the water of the rivulet is tepid, caused by a hot spring which empties itself into the Ahsa from a side valley, higher up than where Burckhardt crossed the Wady El Ahsa.

In concluding this notice of the thermal springs of the country, we shall only recall attention to the fact that they are all found near the valley of the Jordan and its lakes.

Of the lake commonly called the Dead Sea, near which the springs last described are found, we shall soon have occasion to speak more fully, and shall now only notice some of those volcanic indications which it so abundantly offers. Mr. Russegger observes that the mountains between Jerusalem and Jordan, in the valley of the Jordan itself, and those around the basin of the Dead Sea, bear unequivocal evidence of volcanic agency; such as disruptions, upheavings, faults, &c.; proofs of which agency are still notorious in the continual earthquakes, hot springs, and formations of asphalt.

As in the case of the lake of Tiberias, some travellers have thought that the bed of the Dead Sea exhibited the appearance of the crater of a volcano. This Chateaubriand denies. He says,— "I cannot concur in the opinion of those who suppose that the Dead Sea is no other than the crater of a volcano. I have seen Vesuvius, Solfatara, Monte Nuovo in the lake of Fusino, the Peak of the Azores, the Mameliff opposite Carthage, and the unextinguished volcanoes of Auvergne; and I have remarked in all of them the same characteristics,—that is to say, mountains excavated in the form of a tunnel, lava, and ashes, which exhibited incontestable proofs of the agency of fire. But the Dead Sea, on the contrary, is a long lake, curved like a bow, enclosed between two chains of mountains, which exhibit no coherence of form or homogeneity of structure. These chains do not unite at the two extremities of the lake: they continue, in one direction, to border the valley of the Jordan, and, in the north, expand to enclose the lake of Tiberias; while, on the other, they are seen to separate, and lose themselves in the sands of Yemen.* It is true that bitumen, hot springs, and phosphoric stones, are found in the eastern mountains, but there are none in the mountains opposite; nor does the presence of thermal waters, sulphur, and asphaltum, alone suffice to attest the anterior existence of a volcano."

We have quoted this, because it has been reproduced by later travellers, and may hence chance to stand for more than it is worth. We have also thought the whole subject, as connected with an event which, in the other division of this work, has passed historically under our notice, claimed the somewhat extended attention which we have given to it in a note at the end of this chapter, to which we now refer. In this place we shall now continue our own course.

In the region to which our attention is now directed—that of the Dead Sea—it is interesting to note how exactly present appearances coincide with the intimations which the Scriptures offer. The mines and sources of asphaltum, the "slime-pits," which, according to the Bible, existed there before the Vale of Siddim was desolated, are still there, and have given to the lake one of the most common of its names. There also we find the traces of that terrible convulsion by which Sodom and Gomorrah were overthrown, in the same "brimstone, and salt, and burning,"† the same "salt-pits, and perpetual desolation," to which the sacred writers allude.

* This is not correct: but the reader is aware that the southern mountains were unknown when Chateaubriand wrote.

† Deut. xxix. 23; Zeph. ii. 9.

One instance of the occurrence of sulphur, which is so conspicuously mentioned in the Scriptural accounts, has just been noticed in Captain Mangles's account of the hot-springs of the river Arnon. Not only the borders of the lake, but in different parts, the plains and valleys to the east of it, exhibit remarkable sulphureous appearances. At a place about twenty-five miles eastward from the head of the lake, Buckingham remarked that the surface of the soil was "covered with patches of a yellowish white substance like powder of brimstone or sulphur, a fact remarked also in the valley of the Jordan, near the head of the Dead Sea, and almost in a line with this to the westward, at the distance of about thirty miles. The taste and smell of this powder were highly sulphureous; and my guide observed that the same substance was found in abundance all around the shores of the Dead Sea It is beyond a doubt that these regions, from the Lake of Tiberias, southward, to the termination of the Lake of Asphaltes, have, at some very remote period, been subject to volcanic convulsions; and it is probable that the hot-springs of Tiberias, the bitumen of the Sea of Lot, and the sulphuric powder of the plains near it, all owe their existence to one common origin." In continuation, he thinks that the swallowing up of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah may, even from the local appearances, well be concluded a historical fact, and accomplished probably by means of some great "volcanic operation," of which the Lake of Tiberias, the river Jordan, and the Dead Sea, bear so many indications.(*)

To the various notices of the presence of sulphur which we have adduced in the preceding paragraphs, we shall only add the information of Burckhardt, that on the shore of the Dead Sea, towards the north, pieces of native sulphur are found at a small depth beneath the surface, and are used by the Arabs to cure diseases in their camels. This, however, is not by any means confined to the north. At the opposite, or southern extremity of the lake, lumps of nitre and fine sulphur, from the size of a nutmeg up to that of a small hen's egg, were found by Captains Irby and Mangles, in such a situation as rendered it clear to them that they had been brought down by the rain, and that their deposits must be sought in the cliffs. Dr. Shaw, observing that sulphur is found promiscuously with bitumen upon the shore, thought it possible that they had come up together from the bottom. But it now appears that if this be at all correct, it can only be so with reference to a portion of the sulphur which is found.

The bitumen of this part cannot be more fitly noticed than in this place. The interest attached to it, from its being mentioned in the most ancient book in the world, in alluding to the state of the country, before the overthrow of Sodom was attended with the effects which we now notice, has on more than one occasion been indicated.

As this substance is found in lumps upon the surface and western shore of the lake, it has been thought that it rose in a fluid state from sources at the bottom, and became hard by exposure to the air on the surface. "*I was informed*," says Shaw "that the bitumen for which this lake has been always remarkable is mixed, at certain times, from the bottom of the lake in large hemispheres, which, as soon as they touch the surface, and are thereby acted upon by the external air, burst at once with great smoke and noise, like the *pulvis fulminans* of the chemists, and disperse themselves into a thousand pieces. But this only happens near the shore: for in greater depths, the eruptions are supposed to discover themselves in such columns of smoke as are now and then observed to arise from the lake. And, perhaps, to such eruptions as these we may attribute that variety of pits and hollows, not unlike the traces of many of our ancient lime-kilns, which are found in the neighbourhood of this lake." Remembering the bitumen-pits mentioned in the Bible, this last circumstance is very observable. Pococke thinks it probable that there are subterraneous fires which throw up the bitumen at the bottom of the sea, where it may form itself into a mass, which may be broken by the motion of the water occasioned by high winds. All that is stated by both these authorities is very possible, excepting the last circumstance, for the lake is little visited by high winds, and the water is too dense and the basin too deep to allow any superficial agitation to exert any appreciable influence at the bottom. Other causes may, however, operate in detaching from the bottom any masses of bitumen which may have been there deposited from subaqueous sources.

But the information obtained by Seetzen and Burckhardt ascribes a different origin to the asphaltum of the Dead Sea. They were both informed by the natives of Kerek that the substance originates in the rocks on the eastern side of the lake. The latter traveller was informed that it came from the mountain which blocked up the passage along the eastern border of the lake, at a distance of about six miles south of the Arnon. The Arabs pretend that it oozes from the fissures of the cliff of this mountain, and collects in large pieces in the rocks below, where it gradually increases, and hardens, until it is rent asunder by the heat of the sun, with a loud explosion, and, falling into the water, is carried by the waves, in considerable quantities, to the opposite shores. The information which Seetzen obtained, some years before, at Kerek, does not differ from this in any important point. He learned that the bitumen oozed from certain rocks on the eastern shore, forming gradually a thick crust, which, being detached by the wind, is carried along the surface of the water, to the western shore, where it is gathered by the Arabs, and conveyed in large lumps to Jerusalem. These lumps are so large, as to furnish a load to several camels. But Seetzen understood that the production in this way is slow, and that it is only after an interval of some years, that any considerable quantity of asphaltum can be procured from the shores of the Dead Sea.

Dr. Robinson, who heard the same account, was further informed that the bitumen appears only after earthquakes. It was said that after the earthquake of 1834 a large quantity was cast upon the shore. After the earthquake of Jan. 1, 1837, a large mass of bitumen, which one compared to an island, and another to a house, was driven aground on the west side, when the Arabs and neighbouring inhabitants swam off to it, and cut it up with axes, so as to bring it ashore. No distinct information could be obtained of the appearance of bitumen on the lake except in these two years. This information may serve to illustrate the account of Josephus, who says that the sea in many places sends up black masses of asphaltum, which float on the surface, having the form and size of headless oxen.

The specimens thus collected differ from those obtained from the mines of Hasbeya, in the north, in being considerably more porous, and as having been apparently in a fluid state. In the state in which the asphaltum is usually found, it feels cold, like stone, but is as black as jet, and of exactly the same shining appearance. It is used as pitch, and also occupies a conspicuous place in the pharmacy of the country. The appearances which mummies offer confirm the testimonies of Pliny and other ancient writers, that the asphaltum of the Dead Sea was much used in the embalming of bodies in Egypt.

As to the local origin of this substance, it will be noticed that the accounts which have been given are either conjectural, or from the information of the natives. It appears to us that these accounts are not incompatible, and that all of them may be true. But if one account were to be preferred to the exclusion of the others, we should be inclined to rely most upon the information which such men as Seetzen and Burckhardt obtained at such a place as Kerek.

As here, near the Dead Sea, we are anxious to notice not only traces of volcanic action, but also of the combustible materials which Scripture itself teaches us to look for in this neighbourhood,—this seems as proper a place as any for the mention of the igneous stones which are found on the shores of the lake. These are mentioned in such different terms by different travellers, that one is not always sure that they are speaking of the same substance. Van Egmont and Heymann, who travelled together, alone distinguish *two* sorts of combustible stone; for which reason we must give their account first. Along the northern shores of the Dead Sea, they picked up "several pieces of a kind of black flint, which burned in the fire without any diminution in their size, though they lost considerably in weight; and, in burning, emitted a considerable stench. They are used in the country for fumigation against the plague." Other travellers either do not notice this stone, or confound it with that which Van Egmont and Heymann proceed to notice, as follows:—"Among the mountains, near this sea, is also found a blackish stone, very much resembling the touchstone, and nearly of the same qualities. This is also inflammable, and as nauseous as that met with on the shore. The church of the holy sepulchre is paved with it." It is a pity that the descriptions, in both instances, are not more clear. As one of these stones is found upon the beach, and the other upon the mountains, it might be presumed that both were really the same stone in different situations,—first, in its natural state on the mountains, and, next, as washed down to the beach by rains, and there rounded by the action of the waves, and superficially modified by the deposits of the lake, were it not that the stone first noticed is compared to flint, and the other to touchstone. As, however, it is difficult to collect a satisfactory distinction from mere differences of situation—between the shore and the mountain—in which stones are found, the stone which Hasselquist found on the shore may be identified with that which Van Egmont obtained in the mountains, if a better agreement is found between them and those which *both* travellers

found on the beach. Hasselquist says that the stones along the north-western shore are all of quartz, of different sizes and colours. "Here," he continues, "I found quartz stones in the form of a slate, which is one of the rarest natural curiosities which I got in my travels. If it was burned it smelt like bitumen; which proves that it had its origin from it, like all the slate of this country."

Without being well able to account for the confusion of names applied to this remarkable product, we must at present suppose that the stone mentioned by Hasselquist, and at least one of the two mentioned by Van Egmont and Heymann, are the same which other writers notice under a singular variety of names,—such as the Stone of Moses (the native name), fetid limestone, stinkstone, swinestone, and other equally agreeable appellations.

Pococke, describing it as "the Stone of Moses," observes that it burns like a coal, and turns only to a white stone—not to ashes; and the fact that it smells, in burning, like the asphaltum, does not lead him to conclude, with Hasselquist, that it originated from that substance, but that the bitumen proceeded from it. He ingeniously supposes that a stratum of this stone under the Dead Sea is one part of the matter that feeds the subterraneous fires, and that the bitumen boils up out of it. Perhaps this matter might be set at rest if some traveller would take the trouble to ascertain the character of the rock, from which the asphaltum is alleged to ooze, on the eastern shore of the lake.

Dr. Clarke had an opportunity of examining pieces of this stone which were brought to Jerusalem to be employed in the manufacture of rosaries and amulets, to which purposes it is largely applied. In this form it is worn as a charm against the plague; and the Doctor considers that a similar superstition prevailed in very early ages, from the fact of his having found amulets of the same substance in the subterranean chambers below the pyramids of Sakkara in Upper Egypt. He describes it as "black fetid limestone." From his account it appears that the fetid effluvia are excited not only by burning, but, when partially decomposed, by friction, which is now known to be owing to the presence of sulphuretted hydrogen. All bituminous limestone has not this property; but that of the Dead Sea possesses it in a remarkable degree.

The asphaltic *mines* of Hasbeya, to which allusion has lately been made, adjoin the remoter source of the Jordan, and therefore may be regarded in connection with the phenomena which the valley of that river and its borders and extremities exhibit. In the neighbourhood in question, the mountains are, for the most part, calcareous, and at the bottom of the hills are seen strata of trap. The mine of asphaltum is at the distance of a league W.S.W. from Hasbeya. It is situated on the declivity of a chalky hill, and the bitumen is found in large veins at about twenty feet below the surface. The pits are from six to twelve feet in diameter. The workmen descend by means of a rope and wheel; and in hewing out the bitumen leave columns of that substance at different intervals, to support the earth above. Pieces of several rotolas* in weight each are brought up. There are upwards of twenty-five of these pits, but the greater part of them are abandoned, and overgrown with shrubs. The workmen are only employed during the months of summer, and Burckhardt noticed only one pit that appeared to have been recently worked. The people of the neighbourhood employ the bitumen to secure their vines from insects; but the greater part of the produce is sold to the merchants of Damascus, Beirout, and Aleppo. The bitumen is called Hommar,† and the pits or wells Bia el Hommar.

Returning to the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea, we may observe that the most southward volcanic indications which that neighbourhood offers, are those which occur in the Wady El Ahsa, and which, on account of the hot-springs there, have been noticed in a preceding page.

The region of the great valley which extends from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Akabah has been too partially explored to enable us to speak positively as to the presence or absence of volcanic indications. We know not that any have been noticed by travellers, nor, from what has been noticed, are we led to expect that any will be found.

Proceeding farther to the south,—into the peninsula of Sinai,—however, volcanic indications are again discovered. No dependence can be placed upon such expressions occurring in travellers as "black volcanic-looking mountains," and so forth,—for mountains which are not volcanic may look black, and may even seem to exhibit the action of fire. We have seen such misleading expressions applied to mountains which we know, from other sources, to have nothing volcanic in their nature, however black may be their looks. Burckhardt, who is still, and is likely long to remain, the first and most trustworthy authority in all that relates to the peninsula of Sinai, observes that there are no traces of volcanic action in its more elevated regions; but his attention was attracted to some striking appearances in the lower region, on the eastern shore towards the point, or southern extremity of the peninsula. Sherm is about nine miles to the north of the terminating point, Ras Mohammed; and here the traveller states,—"From Sherm we rode an hour and a quarter among low hills near the shore. Here I saw, for the first and only time in this peninsula, volcanic rocks. For a distance of about two miles the hills presented perpendicular cliffs, formed in half circles, none of them being more than sixty to eighty feet in height; in other places there was an appearance of volcanic craters. The rock is black, with sometimes a slight red appearance, full of cavities, and of a rough surface; on the road lay a few stones, which had separated themselves from above. The cliffs were covered by deep layers of sand, and the valleys at their feet were also overspread with it. It is possible that other rocks of the same kind may be found towards Ras Abou Mohammed, and hence may have arisen the term of black (μέλανα ὄρη), applied to these mountains by the Greeks. It should be observed, however, that low sand-hills intervene between the volcanic rocks and the sea, and that above them, towards the higher mountains, no traces of lava are found, which seems to show that volcanic matter is confined to this spot."

That this spot exhibits the only traces of volcanic action in the lower region of the peninsula cannot yet perhaps be affirmed. But we are not aware that any other indications have been found; for although, with reference to Wady Bodera—another and distant point on the opposite side of the peninsula,—Lord Lindsay says that "all its mountains are more or less volcanic-looking, some of them resembling the heaps of cinders thrown out from an iron foundry,"—Burckhardt himself is more to be trusted, in virtue of the more precise language in which he describes the very same valley as consisting of sand-rocks, and its ground deeply covered with sand.

When Burckhardt says that the Lower Sinai alone exhibits traces of volcanic action, he must of course be understood to speak, in the popular sense, of the more easily recognisable and (if we are right in so using the word) *secondary* volcanic action. But it appears more clearly from his own descriptions than could otherwise be the case, that the peninsula in general, and the Upper Sinai in particular, exhibit more marked traces of *primary* volcanic commotion than can be found in any part of the extensive tract which we have passed under review. The superposition of unstratified crystalline rocks in the Upper Sinai, and the abundant manifestation of various trap-rocks along the eastern shore, equally suggest to the geologist the action of internal heat in ages very remote. The very prominent appearance in this peninsula of rocks usually considered igneous, will have struck the reader in the geological statement which the preceding chapter contains.

We have now surveyed, with a view to the volcanic indications it might offer, the whole long line of country, extending from the mountains of Lebanon to the uttermost cape of the Sinai peninsula. Desiring to keep as nearly as possible to the immediate borders of the prolonged basins formed by the valley of the Jordan and the Gulf of Akabah, we refused to turn aside to collect the volcanic indications which are offered by the country to the south of Damascus, and to the east of the lands occupied by the tribes beyond Jordan: but we must now direct our attention to them.

To the east of the regions of Bashan and of Gilead extends a broad and very even plain, which, although below the level of the high plains nearer to the Jordan, is much above the level of the valley through which that river flows, and of the lakes which belong to it. This plain, which has from twenty-five to thirty miles of average breadth, and about fifty of extreme length, appears to be the district to which the name of Haouran properly belongs,* although that name appears to be also used more comprehensively, so as to embrace the districts more eastward which have also separate names. The northern portion of this plain is bounded on the east by a remarkable rocky district, called Ledja, about twenty-five miles broad in the widest (or southern) part, and, perhaps, thirty

* The rotola is about five pounds.

† This is just the word by which bitumen is designated in the Hebrew Scriptures; and the original of the "slime pits" in the Vale of Siddim is בארת חמר, *beeroth chamar*,—the apparent difference is merely a difference in pronouncing the same words. The same things are thus called by the same names now as they were four thousand years ago. The same name, Hommar, is also borne by the asphaltic cliffs east of the Dead Sea.

* It is mentioned once by this name in the Old Testament, Ezek. xlvii. 16; and appears to have comprehended the Auranitis and the greater part of the Ituræa, which the New Testament specifies.

miles in length from north to south. Beyond this district southward, and bordering on the east the southern part of the plain of Haouran, is a mountainous district which bears the same name (Jebel Haouran) as that plain. Beyond these mountains eastward is the unexplored region called Szaffa, which we only know from the reports collected by Burckhardt, as resembling the Ledja in its characteristics, and being three days' journey in circuit. (8)

The extensive tract of country comprehending these several districts, still more even than that which lies nearer the Jordan, was utterly unknown till the present century. Seetzen was the first to explore it in some parts, and he furnished to the European public the first notions of its physical as well as moral condition. It was afterwards more extensively traversed and more minutely described by Burckhardt; and although later travellers have, since the change of government, ranged the country with a degree of facility and safety unknown in his time, none of them have added any information of importance to that which he supplied.

The immense plain of the Haouran is sometimes perfectly level for miles together, sometimes it is slightly undulating, and here and there are seen low round hills, on the declivities or at the foot of which most of the villages of the country are situated. The soil is naturally rich, and needs but the application of water to render it abundantly fertile: hence for some time after the season of rain, and wherever moisture is present, the plain is covered with the most luxuriant wild herbage. Artificial meadows can hardly be finer than these desert fields; and it is this which renders the Haouran a favourite resort of the Bedouins. *This* it may be important to note historically, concerning a country so close on the Hebrew border. The district is, however, bare of trees, which is true of the whole country, except among the Haouran mountains, where groves of oak and other trees are found.

The mountains comprehended under the name of Jebel Haouran have been less adequately explored and described than the plain. Viewed from the distance westward, they exhibit a broken outline, and are not of very considerable elevation from the plain; but their summits have been seen covered with snow in the middle of March. The highest mountain is the Kelb, or Kelab Haouran, which is a cone arising from the lower ridge of the mountains. This is barren on the south and east sides, but fertile on the north and west. Its base is surrounded by a forest, and Burckhardt was told that the ascent from that forest to the summit would occupy an hour; and that from thence a prospect of "the sea" [qy. the Dead Sea?] might be obtained in clear weather. This traveller states the characteristics of several of the inferior mountains of this region; but, unfortunately, he neglects to notice the geological construction, except in one instance, when his attention being particularly engaged by the old castle of Szalkhat, which stands upon one of the exterior hills of this group, towards the south, he observes that the hill itself "consists of alternate layers of the common black tufwacke of the country, and of a very porous, deep red, and often rose-coloured pumice-stone." As he elsewhere observes that this same black stone is found all over the country, and is the only species which it offers, we may presume that it is also the principal constituent of the other mountains.

The aspect of the rocky district of Ledja is singular, and far from pleasing. It presents a level tract, covered with heaps of black stones, and small irregular-shaped rocks, without a single agreeable object for the eye to repose on, except in the patches of meadow which are sparingly interspersed among the stones. In the central part of this district, called by Burckhardt the Inner Ledja, the ground is more uneven, the rocks higher, and the roads more difficult.

It should be observed, that this same black stone is also found all over the Haouran, in a more dispersed form: that masses of it are also found beyond this plain, even to the borders of the Jordan and the Dead Sea. Its presence at various points on the eastern side of the Jordan's valley, has indeed been noticed already by us, and its character described: for this is doubtless that black stone which has been so often mentioned, and which, under the various names of black basalt, black porous tufa, black tufwacke, black stone (or tufwacke) of the Haouran, or of the Ledja, various travellers—Seetzen, Burckhardt, Buckingham, and others—have concurred in referring to a volcanic origin. It is for this reason that we have taken occasion to describe the whole district in this place and under the present head.

From a comparison of all the various notices of this black stone, we collect that the masses in and about the Ledja are larger, more dense, and more thickly set than elsewhere; and that progressively, as we remove from the Ledja, the masses become smaller, more dispersed, and of more porous texture. If, therefore, these stones be the result of volcanic action, we are entitled to consider that the Ledja was the centre of that action, from which the black stone was dispersed widely over the neighbouring region. That the masses of this stone which are found near the valley of the Jordan and its lakes *might* proceed from volcanic explosion in the Ledja, is physically quite possible; but all things considered, and particularly as it seems that the black stone along the Jordan is somewhat less dense than that of the Haouran, as well as from the appearance of the mountains at whose base the hot-springs of Tiberias rise, we incline to connect the black stone of the country of the Jordan with the other volcanic phenomena which that region exhibits.

The evidence of volcanic action in the Ledja does not rest merely upon the general appearance of that district or of its stone.

On the southern border of this district, towards the Haouran mountains, is a town or village named Nedjeroun. This town is surrounded by a perfect labyrinth of rocks—broad sheets and rugged masses; which, says Lord Lindsay, offers an appearance more like that of the bottom of the crater of Vesuvius, as he saw it in 1830, than anything else to which he could compare it. Buckingham still more distinctly describes the entrance into Nedjeroun as being over beds of rock of a singular kind, having the appearance of volcanic lava suddenly cooled while in the act of boiling in a liquid heat; there being globular masses in some parts, like the bubbles on boiling pitch, and in others a kind of spiral furrows, like the impressions often seen in a semi-liquid when put into violent motion; and on striking it with any hard substance it gave forth a ringing sound, like metal. Several tanks or reservoirs have, however, been excavated in this hard material, in which the rain-water continues to be preserved.

This spot, it will be observed, is about the middle of the southern border-line of this district. More to the east, that is, in the south-eastern angle of the Ledja, several Tels, or detached hills, are found near one another, among or near the low exterior ridges of the Jebel Haouran in that direction. Passing between some of them, Burckhardt observed the ground to be covered with pieces of porous tufa and pumice stone; and he adds, that the western side of one of these hills (the Tel Shoba) appears to have been the crater of a volcano, as well from the character of the minerals which lie assembled on that side of the hill, as from the form of the hill itself, which resembles that of a crater, while the neighbouring hills have rounded tops, without any sharp angles.

In concluding this rapid survey of the various volcanic indications which the country offers, it may be proper to recapitulate the resulting information.

It appears, then, that the great valley of the Jordan, from near its commencement to beyond the asphaltic lake, exhibits numerous traces of the presence of combustible materials and principles, with the results of actual combustion in some former time or times, that indications of this sort are most abundant near the Lake of Gennesareth and the Dead Sea; that the basin of the former was probably, and of the latter certainly, formed by the operation of such combustion; and that, in the progress considerably to the south of this latter lake, no similar indications of secondary volcanic action have been found till we reach the furthermost shores of the Sinai peninsula. That, throughout this line, the indications are more abundant on the eastern than on the western side of the valley of the Jordan, even independently of the separate volcanic manifestations which have been discovered in the Ledja, and the effects of which have been scattered widely over the surrounding districts; and that, finally, such indications as may be found on the opposite, or western, side of the Jordan's valley, are confined to the vicinity of the Lake of Tiberias.

Further, it appears that indications of what we may call *primary* volcanic action, by the presence and superposition of ignigenous rocks, are most strikingly and conspicuously manifested in the upper mountains of the Sinai peninsula, though not entirely confined to it, as something of the sort may be seen to the west of the Lake of Tiberias. The mountainous region in which the peninsula of Sinai terminates is, indeed, so marked and distinct, and so abruptly cut off, by the intersecting El Tyh hills, from the northward desert of alternating gravel, sand, and chalk, as might suggest to one, looking deep and far around him from the loftier summits of these renowned mountains, that the now separating El Tyh hills did, in some far remote age, form the seaward frontier of this region, and that the mountains which rise beyond, and now terminate the peninsula, were elevated by subaqueous volcanic agencies, which alone can adequately account for the phenomena which they exhibit, and to which such phenomena are usually referred.

As there is understood to be an intimate physical connection

between volcanic indications and the agencies by which earthquakes are produced, such observations as the latter phenomena require may very suitably be introduced in this place.

In the first place, it is obvious to remark on the striking illustration of historical over even physical evidence, which is afforded by the fact, that, while many stoutly disbelieve the evidence offered by such plain and palpable volcanic indications as those which we have adduced, no one ever questions that Palestine is very liable to be visited by earthquakes, although there is no physical evidence for this fact, or only such as arises from the connection between them and volcanic manifestations. There is no question about earthquakes. The Scriptures abound in allusions to them, and in figures drawn from them; and history, from very ancient times down to our own day, bears repeated testimony to the devastation they have occasioned. There are, however, only two earthquakes expressly named in Scripture. The first was of such serious importance, as to suggest a sort of date for circumstances as having occurred so long before or after the earthquake. Thus Amos (i. 1) dates his vision "two years before the earthquake;" and, with reference to the same earthquake, another prophet reminds the people how they "fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah."* Chronological comparisons would fix this earthquake to near the end of this king's reign, although Josephus connects it with his sacrilegious attempt to minister in the Temple, and informs us that, on this occasion, the Temple was rent, and that the shock was attended by a sort of hill-slip, whereby the half of a mountain near Jerusalem was broken off, and propelled forward half-a-mile, and, where it stopped, blocked up the road and the royal gardens. It seems, indeed, that such slips of the land do not unusually attend earthquake shocks in this region. An instance has been mentioned already (p. vi.); and that such incidents were things of a familiar knowledge to the Jewish people, appears from the allusions of the Psalmist, when he speaks of the "mountains being carried into the midst of the sea;"† of their "skipping like rams, and the little hills like lambs;"‡ and also of the Prophet, when he declares that "the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and be *removed like a cottage*."§ Hence also the same resort, in the sublime imagery of the sacred prophets and poets, to figures recognizable by the people to whom they spoke, leads them to describe the earth as shaken by the Lord in his anger, as terrified by his indignation, and as trembling at his presence.‖ The other instance mentioned in the Scriptures, is that of the extraordinary quaking of the earth and rending of the rocks which attended the crucifixion of our Lord.¶

Our information concerning the earthquakes which have been experienced in Palestine is considerably defective. But how unusually frequent and destructive they have been in Syria generally, as well as in Asia Minor, the reader of history needs not be told; and although we may suspect that Palestine, in particular, could not be insensible to those great and terrible earthquakes which have so repeatedly overthrown Antioch and the other cities of Syria, we dare not, in the absence of the positive information which there is no means of obtaining, insist upon this; but give our chief attention to those cases by which the Holy Land *is known* to have been more or less affected.

But it may be well to premise two or three physical facts which we have met with; and although some of them apply to Syria generally, there is no doubt that they equally apply to Palestine in particular. The coast is more subject to earthquakes than any part of the country: the more elevated parts being comparatively exempt from their visitation; and from this, perhaps, proceeds the comparative exemption of Jerusalem—the situation of which is very elevated—from this calamity. The Psalmist is supposed to refer to this in Ps. xlvi. 2—5. Dr. Shaw observed in Barbary that earthquakes occurred generally at the end of summer or autumn, a day or two after great rains. "The cause," he says, "may perhaps arise from the extraordinary constipation, or closeness of the earth's surface at such times, whereby the subterraneous streams (?) will be either sent back or confined; whereas in summer, the whole country being full of deep chinks, or chasms, the inflammable particles have an easier escape." As the true theory of earthquakes appears not yet to have been distinguished, we shall say nothing of this one, but proceed to state that Volney cites Shaw's account of the time and circumstances of earthquakes in Barbary, as entirely applicable to Syria also. What Dr. Russell says on the subject of earthquakes, applies in particular to Aleppo; yet, from several slight intimations in histories and travels, we imagine it may also be applicable to those parts of Palestine which are most subject to earthquakes. He says:—"There are few years that earthquakes are not felt at Aleppo; but being in general slight, and so long a time having elapsed since the city has suffered much from them,* the dread they occasion is only momentary, unless the public happen to be alarmed by exaggerated accounts of what may, at the same time, have befallen other towns of Syria; and then, indeed, the return of such slight shocks, as would otherwise have passed unregarded, spreads universal terror. When the shocks happen in the daytime, they often are not felt by persons walking in the streets, or in the crowded bazaars; but in the silence of the night, they are often dreadful, and make an awful impression on persons roused from sleep."

As earthquakes are *events*, we are somewhat doubtful whether they more properly belong to this, or to the other division of our subject. But, upon the whole, it has seemed best to bring together in this place some particulars concerning the more remarkable earthquakes which have occurred in Palestine: as the reader will thus be the better enabled, than by accounts dispersed through the historical portion of the work, to estimate the character of such calamities, as exhibited in that country.

We shall now specify the principal earthquakes which history records to have visited the Holy Land, dwelling particularly on those of 1202 and 1837, seeing that our information concerning them throws more light upon the character of these visitations than any other accounts supply.

In the thirty-first year before Christ, and in the seventh year of the reign of Herod the Great, the whole land of Judea was shaken by such an earthquake as had never before been experienced. Many thousand people† were buried under the ruins of their houses, and the cattle were destroyed in vast numbers.

How far Palestine was affected by the dreadful earthquakes which visited most of the provinces of the Eastern empire in the years 365, 394, and 396, we are not informed very precisely: we know, however, that the shock of the former, on the morning of the twenty-first day of July, overthrew several cities in Palestine, although its effects were the most ruinous in the island of Crete, where the shock was the most violent. It appears also, incidentally, in the accounts which are left, that many cities of Palestine had been subverted by preceding earthquakes, of which no historical notices remain. From comparing the notices which we have collected, we find data for concluding that Palestine is never free from the effects of earthquakes which are at the same time felt in the north of Syria and in Egypt. We have, therefore, no doubt that the country suffered from the violent earthquakes which, in 447, overturned many towers and stately buildings in Constantinople, Antioch, *and Alexandria*; and which in different parts of the Eastern empire laid many cities in the dust.

We may well conclude that Palestine shared in the calamities which were caused, in the East, by some of the numerous earthquakes which distinguished the reign of Justinian. As, however, we have no positive information to adduce, we shall only note the probability, suggested by *ascertained* facts, that this country felt at least the remoter vibrations of the earthquakes which ruined Antioch, which tore a mountain from Libanus, and cast it into the sea, and by which the coast of Phœnicia was ravaged and Beirout (Berytus) destroyed.

In the year 748, the Emperor Constantine Copronymus was warring with the Saracens in Syria and Palestine, when he was diverted from following up some advantages he had gained by the frequent earthquakes which occurred in those provinces at that time, and by which many cities in them were swallowed up, and others ruined; while some, if Nicephorus may be credited, were removed, without any considerable damage, six miles and upwards from their former sites. These earthquakes are said—as is often said of recent earthquakes—to have been by far the most destructive that had been known in any age.

The Armenian historian, Abulfaragi, records several earthquakes by which Syria was visited in those ages. That country suffered largely from the earthquake which convulsed the south-west of Asia in the month Shaaban (December), A.H. 242 (A.D. 866). Very terrible earthquakes were felt in Syria in the month Rajam (August), A.H. 552 (A.D. 1174), by which large numbers of people were destroyed, and many towns and districts devastated, particularly those of Emesa, Hamah, Shizur, Caphar, Tab

* Zech. xiv. 5. † Ps. xlvi. 2. ‡ Ps. cxiv. 4, 6. § Isa. xxiv. 20.
‖ As in Ps. civ. 32, xcvii. 4; 1 Chron. xvi. 30; Jer. x. 12, li. 15; &c.
¶ Matt. xxvii. 51.

* Few of our readers can be unaware how dreadfully Aleppo has suffered from repeated earthquakes *since* the time of Dr. Russell.

† The Jewish historian gives the number of slain as 10,000 in one place (Ant. l. xvi. c. 7), and as 30,000 in another (De Bell. Jud. l. i. c. 14); which latter number seems to agree best with the large terms which he employs in the description.

(Tabariah?), Moarrah, Apamea, Homs, Arka, Ladikiah, Tripoli, and Antioch. During another earthquake, in A.D. 1034, the earth opened in many parts of Syria, and many people were swallowed up. On this occasion even Jerusalem suffered, for parts of the walls were thrown down. Half of Ptolemais, the lighthouse at Ascalon, and the higher parts of Gaza, were overthrown. The sea retreated three parasangs, and many people who were employed in collecting the fish left upon the strand were swallowed up by the sudden return of the waters.

We hear of no more earthquakes until the times of the Crusaders. William of Tyre gives a very lively account of the terrible earthquake which ravaged Syria and the East in the year 1170. He says this earthquake was felt to the ends of the earth, by which we may understand that it was more than usually extensive in its effects. Indeed, he says that the shocks were so violent that nothing like this convulsion had ever been read of in ancient histories or was within the experience of any living man. The strongest and most ancient cities were overthrown to their foundations, and the inhabitants buried in their ruins. Nothing was anywhere heard but lamentable cries, nothing seen but funereal sights and tears. Among the cities overthrown were some of the largest and noblest of Syria and Phœnicia. On the coast, the cities of Jebail, Ladikiah, and Tripoli, were destroyed, and the strong and lofty towers of Tyre were cast down; and inland the cities of Aleppo, Cæsarea, Hamah, Emesa, and others of less note, with a vast number of castles and fortresses, were overthrown. This indicates a course often taken by the earthquakes which visit this region. Palestine, in the more limited sense, appears to have suffered but little; and the archbishop makes the important observation which we have already adduced, that the more elevated parts of Palestine were exempted from the evils which this earthquake caused.

The first good and clear account of an earthquake in this region, is that which the Arabian historian, Abdallatiff, gives of the very terrible one which ravaged Syria and Egypt on the morning of Monday, the 20th of May, 1202. The historian, who was himself in Egypt (Alexandria), says that the first shock was so violent, that every one sprung from his bed and poured forth cries to Almighty God. The earthquake lasted a long time, and its shocks were compared to the motion given to a sieve, or to that of a bird as it alternately rises and drops its wing in flight. There were in all three very violent shocks, which shook the buildings, broke the roofs and rafters, and threatened with ruin the houses which were in bad condition, and those which were built high, or which stood on elevated situations. There were some fresh shocks towards the middle of the same day, but they were so slight and of such momentary duration, that they were not generally noticed. The night had been so extremely cold, that people had been obliged to cover themselves with more clothes than was usual at that time of the year; but the ensuing day was as remarkable for its extreme heat, attended by a most suffocating and pestilential wind (the simoom). Egypt had rarely experienced such an earthquake as this.

From intelligence which afterwards arrived, it appeared that this earthquake had ravaged the whole length and breadth of Syria, where its effects had been far more disastrous than in Egypt. Many places disappeared entirely, without leaving any trace of their existence, and multitudes of men perished. But the historian *knew not that any city in all Syria had suffered less than Jerusalem*, by which only some very slight damages had been sustained. The Moslem annalist fails not, also, to note that the ravages of the earthquake had been much more extensive and fatal in the districts occupied by the Franks (Crusaders) in Syria, than in those possessed by the Mohammedans. On the coasts, the sea rose in an unusual manner, producing much destruction and alarm; and when the waves retired, a great number of vessels and fishes were found high upon the shore. In different places the waters seemed to open, and to gather themselves into great masses, like mountains, with deep valleys between.

In concluding his account of this awful visitation, Abdallatiff gives copies of two letters which he received from Hamah and Damascus, affording some interesting details of the manner in which Syria had been affected by it. The Hamah correspondent states that the earthquake had been felt twice on the Monday; the first time it lasted about an hour, but the second was not quite so long, though much stronger. And on the Tuesday two more shocks were felt; the first about noon, and the other about three hours after. As usual in such cases, everybody supposed that the earthquake was the precursor of the last day. The letter is rather meagre of facts: but it states that the fortresses at Hamah and Baalbec had been much damaged; and that several public and private buildings had fallen down in Damascus, burying many people in their ruins.

This last intelligence is confirmed by the Damascus correspondent, who specifies the buildings which had been overthrown; and then proceeds to state the news which had been received at Damascus from other places, particularly from Palestine. Banias and Safed had been in part overthrown. Bysan (*Bethshan*) was entirely destroyed; as were also Arka * and Safitha.† At Naplouse not a wall was left standing, save in the street occupied by the Samaritans; "*but it is said that Jerusalem has, thank God, suffered nothing.*" A third part of the city of Tyre had been overthrown, as well as the greater part of Acre. Most of the towns in the Haouran had been swallowed up, and it was not yet known that any had been spared. In Lebanon there was a defile between two mountains: there the mountains had met and shut in for ever the persons, about 200 in number, who were then in the valley. The writer of this letter adds that shocks of the earthquake continued to be felt for four days, by day and by night; and concludes with recommending himself to the care of God's good providence.

The great earthquake of 1759 is thus noticed by Volney: "In our time (in 1759) there happened one which caused the greatest ravages. It is said to have destroyed, in the valley of Baalbec alone, upwards of 20.000 persons, a loss which has never been repaired. For three months the shocks of it terrified the inhabitants so much as to make them abandon their houses, and dwell under tents."

A very full account of this earthquake was furnished by Dr. Patrick Russell, the physician to the British factory at Aleppo, in a letter to his brother, Dr. Alexander Russell, by whom it was communicated to the Royal Society, in whose 'Transactions' it appears. As a paper on this subject from a man of science is of more than ordinary value, we shall here state the particulars which seem of the most importance.

The spring of the year was unusually dry, the summer temperate, and the autumn, although the rains came on in September, might be esteemed much drier than in ordinary years. On the morning of the 10th of June, a slight shock of an earthquake was felt at Aleppo, and was, as usual, soon forgot; and it was not ascertained that this shock had been attended with severe effects in any other place. On the 30th of October, about four in the morning a pretty severe shock occurred, which lasted rather more than a minute, but did no damage at Aleppo: and about ten minutes after, there was another shock, but the tremulous motion was less violent and did not continue above fifteen seconds. It had rained a little the preceding evening; and when the earthquake happened, the west wind blew fresh, the sky was cloudy, and it lightened. This earthquake occasioned little sensation at Aleppo, and that little had subsided, when attention was recalled to it by the arrival of intelligence from Damascus that the same shock which had been experienced at Aleppo had been felt there, followed by several others, and that considerable damage had been done. From that time continual accounts arrived from Tripoli, Sidon, Acre, and the whole coast of Syria, describing the damages which this earthquake had occasioned. These reports excited great alarm among the people, and it soon appeared that the worst of their apprehensions were to be realised.

The morning of the 25th November had been very serene; some clouds arose in the afternoon, and the evening was remarkably hazy, with little or no wind, when, about half an hour after seven, the earthquake came on. The motion was at first gently tremulous, increasing by degrees till the vibrations became more distinct, and at the same time, so strong as to shake the walls of the houses with considerable violence; they then became more gentle, and then again more violent, and thus changed alternately several times during the shock, which lasted altogether about two minutes. In about eight minutes after this was over, a slight shock of a few seconds' duration succeeded. The thermometer was at 50°, and the barometer was at 28·9, the mercury undergoing no alteration. There was little or no wind during the night, and the sky was clear, excepting some clouds which hung about the moon. At a quarter past four the next morning, there was another shock, which lasted somewhat less than a minute, and was hardly so strong as that of the preceding night.

The night of the 26th was rainy and cloudy, and at nine o'clock there was a slight shock of a few seconds; the motion this time appeared to be very deep, and was rather undulating than tremulous. The weather on the 27th was cloudy and rainy. From the mid-

* De Sacy is doubtless correct in concluding this to be the Arka of Phœnicia.

† From the indications of De Sacy, this may seem to have been in or on the western border of the desolate region of Szaffa, concerning which there is a note at the end of this chapter.

night of the 25th, besides the shocks which have been mentioned, four or five slight shocks were felt; but Dr. Russell himself was not sensible of any till the morning of the 28th, when a short pulsatory shock was experienced. The same day at two o'clock there was a rather smart shock, lasting about forty seconds. From this time the Doctor was not sensible of any further shocks, though there were those who felt or imagined several slight vibrations every day.

It appears that the people of Aleppo were more frightened than hurt by these earthquakes. The buildings sustained little damage and no one was killed. Other places suffered more severely. Antioch had many of its buildings overthrown, and some of its people killed. And from advices afterwards received, it appeared that the earthquake of the 25th had been particularly ruinous. One-third of Damascus was overthrown; and of the people unknown thousands perished in the ruins. The greater part of the survivors fled to the fields, where they remained, alarmed by the slightest shocks, and deterred by them from re-entering the city to attempt the relief of such persons as might yet be saved by clearing away the rubbish.

Tripoli suffered more than Aleppo. Three minars and many houses were thrown down, while the walls of many more were rent. The resident Franks and many of the natives took refuge in the open fields. At Sidon, great part of the Franks' khan was overthrown, and some of the Europeans narrowly escaped with their lives. Acre and Ladikiah suffered little besides rents in some of the walls. This terrible visitation of Providence extended over 10,000 square miles.

There were several slight shocks in December and even in January, but none requiring particular notice. In one of his communications, dated the 7th December, Dr. Russell observes that the weather had for ten days been gloomy and rainy; a change which the people were willing to regard as favourable. At that time it often lightened at night, and thunder was heard in the distance.*

Syria was visited by a most terrible earthquake in the year 1822. On the 13th of August, about nine o'clock in the evening, Aleppo, the third city of the Ottoman empire, and one of the most beautiful, whose buildings were entirely of stone, and some of which deserved the name of palaces, was, in one instant, overthrown to its foundations, and thousands of its inhabitants buried in the ruins.† Antioch, Latakia, and many other towns and villages in the pashalic of Aleppo, were also destroyed. Very affecting accounts of this calamity were given at the time by Mr. John Barker, the British consul in Syria, and by his brother Mr. Benjamin Barker, the agent of the Bible Society,—the former writing from the ruins of Antioch, and the latter from those of Aleppo. But as their accounts furnish little of such information as we seek, and as the effects of this convulsion appear to have been scarcely felt in Palestine, we shall pass on to the recent and very terrible visitation which brought in the new year of 1837.

Accounts of this earthquake have been furnished by Mr. Moore, the consul-general at Beirout; by the Rev. Mr. Thompson, an American missionary; and by Mr. Calman, a Jew converted to Christianity and employed on a mission to the Jews in Palestine. These two gentlemen being then in Beirout, immediately entered the Holy Land with the British agent at Sidon, and visited the neighbourhood of the Lake of Tiberias, where the devastation had been greatest, with the view of offering all the assistance in their power to the sufferers. They, therefore, had advantages in giving an account of an earthquake in Palestine not possessed by any one (except William of Tyre) who has given particulars of other earthquakes in that country. The following paragraphs are, therefore, drawn chiefly from the account furnished by Mr. Calman, with the addition of a few particulars from the narratives of Mr. Moore and Mr. Thompson.

Palestine, and in particular the neighbourhood of the Lake of Tiberias, appears to have been the very centre of this mighty concussion, which was felt even to the mountains of Sinai. Indeed, Mr. Moore states that it had been ascertained that the earthquake was felt in a line of five hundred miles in length by ninety in breadth. The violence of the shock, however, spent itself about half-way between Beirout and Jerusalem; or, in other words, the marks of davastation increased as the traveller approached the districts of Safed and Tiberias, and decreased in receding from them—Upper Galilee being the principal scene of ruin.

The travellers, who proceeded to visit the scene of desolation from Beirout, found that the farther they advanced to the S. E., to a certain point, the more violent the shock had been, and the more terrible its effects. In nearly all the places which they passed, where the earthquake was felt, nothing had been left behind but destruction, desolation, and human suffering. They omit details till they come to Gish, a once well-built village, situated upon a high mountain, two hours to the N.W. of Safed which was found to be so thoroughly destroyed and overthrown, that not a house—not even a single stone—had been permitted to keep its place. Of two hundred and fifty inhabitants, all save fifteen had perished.

The substantial information which Mr. Calman gives concerning this earthquake is comprised within a few pages at the latter end of his publication, and which we cannot do better than transcribe almost entire.

"Safed, as I have above described, stood on the steep declivity of a mountain; and though the houses were two stories high, the roofs of the lower streets formed part of the roadway for the inhabitants of the upper. There were no fewer than twenty such streets, and when the earthquake brought down the buildings, the lower streets received, of course, the rubbish of those above; and the lower the streets were, the greater the quantity of rubbish they received. There were, therefore, some streets and houses where the accumulation of rubbish was enormous, and the depth from the lower apartments to the top of the ruins quite incredible, so that no voice could have penetrated half its thickness. These circumstances are necessary to render intelligible the narrative to which I have referred..

"The recurrence of the earthquake, which has been a daily visitor since the first shock, and sometimes very violent, is a great addition to the misery of the people. One of the shocks, on Wednesday afternoon, the 18th, was so violent at Safed, that many parts of the ruins which had stood were shaken down. The rattling noise of the stones, and the cries of those who were digging in search of their friends, brought renewed consternation to every heart; and the dust raised by the new overthrow, led those who were higher up to believe that smoke was issuing from the ground, and that fire would finally follow, and consume them and their tents. A similar shock had taken place on the previous Monday evening. These frightful visitations are not confined to the two cities above spoken of. Throughout the adjacent country as far as Sidon, the inhabitants are in such apprehension of danger from the same source, that nearly all have abandoned their shattered houses, and fled for their lives into caves and holes of the rocks, or, if they can afford it, have erected booths. There was scarcely a cave on our way from Safed to Tabereah (Tibereas) in which there were not people; which reminded me of Lot, on his flight from Sodom, choosing a cave for his abode (Gen. xix. 30). To the same cause, of frequent earthquakes destroying the cities and houses, may, perhaps, be ascribed the habits from which the Horites, or dwellers in caverns in Mount Seir, derived their name (Gen. xiv. 6). A great part of the city of Tyre having been entirely destroyed, and the remaining houses so injured as to be unsafe, its inhabitants, without exception, have withdrawn from their houses, and now live on the beach, some in tents and some in their large boats, which they have drawn on shore, and covered with canvas, where they now possess something like tranquillity of mind. The inmates of the latter seem rather as if in expectation of another flood, than of another earthquake.

"The neighbourhood of Gish, Safed, and Tabereah, bears other marks of the violence of the shock, besides the complete overthrow of those places, in the rents, of various dimensions, traversing the rocks. Not five minutes N.E. of Gish, on the same declivity, there is a rent in the solid rock upwards of sixty feet in length, from a foot to a foot and a half in breadth, and whose depth has not been sounded. Close to the latter two places, fissures in the rocks, in winding directions, stretching as far as the eye could reach, but not so wide as the one just mentioned, every now and then surprised us on our journey. In some places even isolated rocks were rent. The people of Safed and Tabereah told us, that the motion of the earthquake there was felt to be perpendicular, not horizontal; so that it shook every stone from the foundation out of its place. They say the shock was attended with great noise.

"On the north side of Tabereah, numberless hot-springs burst out during the earthquake, and continued for a short time discharging torrents of hot mineral water, which made the lake swell to a most unusual height. Beyond Jordan, in the district of Bashan, volleys of fire were shot out of the ground to such an height, that those who saw it in its descent were led to believe that it came down

* We have recorded these meteorological intimations, as some may be disposed to lay stress upon them; but that the state of the atmosphere can have anything to do with earthquakes or volcanoes appears very doubtful.

† Accounts, as usual, vary; the most common one states that upwards of two-thirds of the city were entirely destroyed, and that from 25,000 to 30,000 was the number of those who perished.

from heaven. Mr. ———, at Jerusalem, who had a very narrow escape from the tumbling stones of the walls of his apartment, immediately on making his escape saw something like a long, brilliant star running from N. to S., probably the same volcanic fire seen by the people beyond Jordan..........................

"There is something not a little surprising in the irregular course pursued by the earthquake. Of villages and buildings within gunshot of each other, one has been destroyed from the foundations, and at the other it has been scarcely felt, and no injury sustained. Gish was completely destroyed; while a village close to it was not at all injured, nor did its inhabitants feel the shock. While the city walls and towers of Tabereah could not withstand it, the mineral baths, about one mile to the south, and which, especially the new one, are comparatively slight buildings, suffered no injury. Lubia, Sedtsherah, and Ramma, villages situated near each other, about two hours N.W. of Tabereah, were all completely overthrown; while at Cana of Galilee, only half an hour distant from some of these, the motion was not felt. Again, another village called Renna, about half-way between Cana and Nazareth, being within half an hour of either place, was utterly destroyed; while Nazareth itself suffered comparatively little.

"It has been sought to explain the phenomenon by the supposition, that the places not affected by the shock stand upon strata already detached, by some former convulsion, from the main strata; and that the places situated on the latter have given way to the impetuosity of the shock."

It appears that the Lake of Tiberias experienced a violent concussion during the whole time the earthquake lasted; and that its waters rose, and swept away many of the inhabitants of Tabereah. On this, as on other occasions, Jerusalem escaped with comparative impunity, and was but slightly affected; but Mr. Calman mentions that the minars on the Mount of Olives were shaken down by the earthquake.

Authentic accounts of all the places in Palestine destroyed or injured by the earthquake of 1837 would be of much value for topographical purposes. We have three lists before us; those of Mr. Moore, Mr. Calman, and Mr. Waghorn. The two first do not differ materially; and as that of the British agent is more extensive and more official, we shall give it the preference, but shall consider it right to draw a few obvious corrections, and to fill a few blanks from the list of Mr. Calman. It is proper, however, to introduce the list, thus formed, by the remark of this gentleman's editor, which is applicable to all statistical documents of similar origin:—"The enumeration of killed and wounded is given faithfully by Mr. Calman, beyond doubt; and he would weigh the testimony offered to him. Still, it is the testimony of Orientals, accustomed to reckon laxly and in round numbers; and must be considered as, at best, an approximation."

A List of Towns, &c., Destroyed or Injured in Syria by the Earthquake on the 1st of January, 1837.

Districts.	Names of Villages.	Number of Houses destroyed.	Number of Persons killed.
Aklin el Tiffa	El Gazi . . .	14	7
	El Tara . . .	. . . . . .	12
	Castle of Bilad Skiff.	. . . . . .	600 head of goats killed.
	Kutus . . .	The whole village	53
	Atuan . . .	Do. . . .	33
	El Salha . . .	Do. . . .	12
	Benthel Gebhel .	Do. . . .	8
	Miss	A part . . .	3
	El Miliah . .	The whole village	Unknown.
	Maroon . . .	Do. . . .	17
	Hasseun . . .	Three-fourths .	13
	Ain Nebli . .	The whole village	12
	Zigish . . .	One-third . .	8
Shara . . .	Amban . . .	Do. . . .	3
	Eble Sakah . .	The whole village	100
	El Matel . . .	Do. . . .	78
	Albo	Do. . . .	25
	Mimis . . .	Do. . . .	5
	El Heam . . .	Do. . . .	150
	Caffar . . .	Do. . . .	72
	El Hurba . .	Do. . . .	5
	Debin . . .	Do. . . .	All the inhabitants.
	Sayora . .	Do. . . .	50
Mevigaoun .	Gish	Do. . . .	235
	El Raschamar .	Do. . . .	40
	Lubia. . . .	Do. . . .	143
	Rami	Do. . . .	180
	Renna . . .	Do. . . .	300
	Ramash . . .	Do. . . .	30
	Towns.		
	Damascus . .	4 minarets and some houses.	7 or 8 killed and wounded.
	Acre	Fortifications .	Do.
	Sidon	Houses greatly injured.	7
	Safed	Destroyed . .	5025 killed,* 405 wounded.
	Tyre	Slightly injured .	12
	Nazareth . . .	Do. . . .	7
	Tiberias . . .	Entirely destroyed	776 killed,† 68 wounded.

The following villages, also in the district of Shara, were entirely destroyed, but the number of the inhabitants who perished is unknown:—Asban, Asbaga, El Atrech, El Shaley; and the following in the district of Mevigaoun—Topte, El Maga, Giatoun, Darel Hata, El Suma, Sulti, Nadris, Usable, Alme Decta, Mogar, Akin, Atbar, Mahrun, Bira, Darel Wafa, El Maydel. Some of the names in this list appear to be misspelled; and we have been able to find the means of correcting only a few of them to our own satisfaction.

Considering by how many such convulsions as these this land has been desolated, causing the utter extinction of numerous towns and villages, no one can wonder at the difficulty which is felt in ascertaining the old sites mentioned in the Scriptures; but surprise may rather be experienced at the very considerable number which have been identified.

It is not strictly within our object to dwell upon the human suffering which this calamity produced, and which such visitations have, doubtless, in all ages, occasioned in the same country, otherwise we could occupy many pages with accounts of the few survivors of this dreadful overthrow, appearing like men whom consternation had divested of sound reason, brooding over the ruins of their habitations, and bemoaning the relatives who still lay buried beneath the ruins:—of those at Safed, with ghastly countenances and tattered clothes, scattered over the four sides of their mountain, destitute of raiment and shelter to screen them from the keen midwinter air of the mountains, and seeming as if they only survived to pine away more slowly and sufferingly than those whom the earthquake had overwhelmed;—of faithful dogs trying, with indefatigable perseverance, to remove the heaps of stones which hid their owners from their sight, and breaking forth, every now and then, into the most mournful howlings, when they found that the efforts of their weak paws were spent in vain;—of the dreadful state of many who were wounded, their poor bodies crushed, broken, torn, in every possible way, beyond all hope of cure; and of the numbers who, in this state, lay upon or about the ruins, with none to care for them or to provide them help or shelter;—of those who, for the first three or four days, continued alive under the ruins, sending forth bitter cries and lamentations, and vain entreaties for help, the attempts to give which, in many cases, crushing them to death by the displacement of the stones and beams which had given them protection;—of those who, after many days, were brought forth barely alive, and who opened their eyes once more upon the light of day, and by that light viewing their few surviving friends and their ruined cities, closed them again for ever;—of the bodies of the slain drawn out and dragged about the fields by greedy dogs, which, emboldened by their horrid fare, became at last dangerous to the living;—or, finally, of the wild inhabitants of the desert hastening gleefully—like vultures to the scent of blood—to reap the harvests for which they did not labour, and to gather the treasures which they never deposited, digging among the ruins, and bearing joyously to their tents and caverns the wealth of the living and the dead.

* 4000 Jews, 25 Christians, 1000 Mohammedans.—*Calman*

† 500 Jews, 26 Christians, 250 Mohammedans.—*Calman.*

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

([1]) Hot Baths of Tiberias, p. 437.—This, from Hasselquist, is a moderate estimate of the heat, as compared with that which the old travellers give. Morison, for instance, says, with some simplicity,—"La source . . . . est si boüillante, qu'il ne me fût pas possible d'en souffrir pendant quelques momens l'incroiable chaleur. J'essaiai plusieurs fois d'y tenir le bout du doigt pendant le tems nécessaire pour prononcer fort vite ce peu de paroles *Gloria Patri et Filio*, mais je ne pû pas y réussir; et je crois qu'une eau qui auroit boüilli sur un grand feu pendant une heure entière, n'auroit rien de plus insuportable." (Voyage, p. 205.) He was evidently not aware that water gains no increase of heat by prolonged boiling. Dr. Richardson, having no thermometer, could not ascertain the temperature of the spring; but it was so hot that the hand could not endure it. The water must remain many hours in the cistern of the bath (as Morison says was the case in his time) before it can be used, and even after this the Doctor thinks its temperature not below 100°. Buckingham *did* apply a thermometer to the water at its issue, when the mercury rose instantly to 130°, which was its utmost limit; but the heat of the water was certainly greater. The statement in the text, making the heat 144°, is from Schubert. Morison says that, on bathing in the lake, he found its water (which is naturally very cold) quite warm, at the distance of twelve paces from the water's edge, and twenty-five or thirty from the source, by reason of the water allowed to escape from the hot-spring. He agrees with later travellers in describing the taste as a mixed one of salt, sulphur, bitumen, and iron. Pococke bottled some of the water, and brought it home, when it was found to hold in solution a considerable quantity of "gross fixed vitriol, some alum, and a mineral salt." The extreme saltness of the water communicates a brackish taste to that of the lake near it.

This spring has been, from ancient times, celebrated for the medicinal properties of its waters; whence it has been a place of much resort, from all parts of Syria, in rheumatic complaints and cases of early debility. For the accommodation of the visitors, suitable baths appear to have been erected, which are at present supplied by a small and mean building, with a low dome. The interior is divided into two apartments, the innermost of which, being the bathing-room, has a cistern eight or nine feet square, sunk below the pavement, for containing the hot water. The spring rises, to supply the cistern, through a small head of some animal. The waters are also taken internally, but not without much precaution, or until due care has been taken to render it drinkable by dilution; for, in its natural state, it is not only extremely hot, but has a stronger mineral flavour than the stomach can endure. Volney informs us that the deposition of the spring is also used medicinally. He says—"for want of clearing, it is filled with a black mud, which is a genuine *Æthiops Martial*. Persons attacked by rheumatic complaints find great relief, and are frequently cured by baths of this mud."

([2]) "On the Destruction of the Vale of Siddim," p. 439.—As we do not contend that the Dead Sea is the crater of a volcano, we have no particular object in showing that Chateaubriand's arguments prove nothing in this matter. But although it be true that the greater number of known volcanoes take the form which he describes, it remains to be proved that such a form is essential to them. We know of no facts or arguments to show that *a volcano* may not exist in a hollow among mountains, and we know that such may exist as a chasm in a plain.* The formation of a mountain crater is a work of time.—the result of a continued propulsion of matter through the same vent, whereby, in process of time, such conical masses are formed as the eloquent Frenchman describes. What he says is, therefore, no more than that the effects which he witnessed at the Dead Sea are not such as result from the *continued* operation of volcanic agencies. And in this we quite agree with him. There is much in Scripture, and much in the present state of the tract of country which we are describing, to render it manifest that it has in different parts, and probably at different times, been subject to volcanic disturbances; but that any of them, however violent, were of long continuance, the Scripture precludes us from supposing.

Much of the misunderstanding in this matter results from the assumed necessity (evidently present to the mind of Chateaubriand) of finding *a volcano* before volcanic manifestations shall be recognised. This is a radical error. In pursuing the inquiry which the present chapter embraces, we have described ourselves as collecting *volcanic indications*, not as looking for the site of *a volcano*. A district, in which no traces of a crater can be found, may exhibit manifestations of volcanic action; such action having been probably sudden, brief, dispersed, and intermittent. To decide concerning these, by a reference to the appearances produced by the long continuance of volcanic action in the same place, can scarcely be considered correct.

* As in that of Kiraunea, in the Sandwich Islands, described in the interesting book of the Rev. W. Ellis.

Again, writers, like Chateaubriand in the present instance, speak of volcanoes, and so forth, with reference to some theoretical notions on the subject. Suspecting that the true theory of volcanoes has not yet been established, we have abstained from any such reference; and in noticing volcanic indications have intended no more than *indications of the action of fire*. We take this to be the simple meaning of the word "volcanic," apart from all theory; and, as the matter involves some points of delicacy in such a work as the present, we beg that the acceptation in which we employ the term may be distinctly understood.

The action of fire implies the presence of combustible materials previously to that action; but how these materials ignite, how combustion is produced, is a question which still remains to be *decided*; for although, probably, the true explanation has been *suggested*, the evidence, which may in the end establish it above all other hypotheses, has not yet been produced. We see nothing to disprove that the ignition may, under differing circumstances, be differently produced; and the variety of theories on the subject, all having some very good reasons in their favour, may tend to sanction this conclusion.

Now, in the case of the Dead Sea, we know, from the best possible authority, that the site it occupies was once a fertile and populous plain. It was in those days that "Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt." (Gen. xiii. 10.) We learn immediately after (xiv. 3, 10) that this site was called the "Vale of Siddim," and that it was replete with combustible materials, which were partly exposed in the form of "slime-pits,"—that is of such sources of bitumen as still are found on the eastern borders of the lake, and as, from the products which rise to the surface, appear still to exist below the waters. The sacred history having thus apprised us of the presence of combustible materials, soon after acquaints us with the occasion of their ignition. Provoked by the iniquities of the people who inhabited the plain, "The Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire* from the Lord out of heaven; and he *overthrew* those cities and all the plain, and that which grew upon the ground."† Abraham, who witnessed this manifestation of the Divine judgment, which he had vainly endeavoured to avert, "looked towards Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and behold, and lo, *the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace*."‡

The object of the sacred account is to inform us that the Lord did, by his special judgment, *overthrow* the sinful cities of the plain, and not to explain *how* that overthrow was effected. We are told, however, that "the Lord rained burning brimstone out of heaven." Some think that this was an ejection upon the plain of burning matter from a volcanic eruption in the neighbourhood; others, that lightning was the agent employed in the ignition of the combustible materials which the plain afforded; while many take the expression to denote the literal projection of fiery matters from the sky upon the plain. We shall not examine these alternatives. The special interposition of Divine providence in bringing down this judgment at the appointed instant, when the iniquities of the inhabitants had ripened them for destruction, would be equally apparent under all. But we submit that, with our previous knowledge of the combustible character of the district, all the intimations which the sacred text affords, are indicative of volcanic action produced by the fiery agency which the Lord in his chosen time supplied. And it may be well to remind the reader that this appearance of falling fire which occasions so much doubtful explanation and comment, is not singular or unexampled; for it has been seen in Mr. Calman's account, that a similar appearance attended that combination of volcanic and earth-shaking agencies which produced the terrible result of 1837.

To those who do not balance and compare dispersed texts with sufficient attention, it might seem, at the first glance, that the destruction of "all the plain" was the consequence of its inundation by the "burning brimstone" which the Lord rained out of heaven. But we must recollect that it was not a submersion by a "fiery deluge," but an "overthrow;" and remembering the "slime-pits" which were exposed in the plain, we can see that a combustion must have ensued, which, by its action on subterraneous gases, would explode the whole plain, casting its contents far and wide, and ultimately causing a great depression of its surface. The Scriptural intimations, and all existing appearances, are in favour of this view.

The plain of Siddim is described, in one of the texts we have cited, as part of the plain of the Jordan, that is, that the river flowed through it. It therefore follows that the plain had about the same level (gradually sloping southward) as the general plain of the Jordan, of which it was part. But now its bottom is very far below that level; and this must have been the result of a convulsion and submersion of its former surface. Whereas, the ultimate effect of a single deluge of fiery matter would have been to *raise* the surface of the plain.

* *i. e.* burning brimstone. † Gen. xix. 24, 25. ‡ Gen. xix. 28

Moreover, the sacred narrative, closely examined, indicates a suddenness of effect—an explosion from sudden ignition—rather than mere submersion by the continuous down-flow of burning matter. It was "early in the morning" when the angels hastened Lot to go forth that he might escape the impending destruction; and it was still "early in the morning" when Abraham looked towards the plain, and saw its smoke ascending like the smoke of a furnace. This intimates that the catastrophe was then over. Had he seen the descending fire, *that* would not have taken his attention. But the fire had fallen—the convulsion had taken place; and the details of the terrible result were hid from his view by the dense smoke which rose from the whole country of the plain as from a furnace. Such a convulsion must have been attended with a fearful noise; and it does not seem unlikely that this noise, together with the shaking of the earth, announced to Abraham that the Lord's purpose was accomplished, and led him to hasten so early in the morning to the place from which a view of the plain might be commanded. We do not see how the nature of this awful event could more clearly be defined than by the collection and comparison of these dispersed intimations.

The explanation which we have suggested is not different, though perhaps more comprehensive than that which Chateaubriand himself is inclined to embrace as "one which allows the inclusion of physical circumstances without injury to religion." This is the notion of Michaelis and Busching, who hold that Sodom and Gomorrah were built upon a mine of bitumen, and that the combustible matters having been enkindled by lightning, the cities sank down in the subterraneous conflagration. We, of course, do not object to this explanation, which is substantially the same which we have given; but we do wonder that, admitting so much of "*la physique*" into the consideration, he should have thought it worth his while to contend against volcanic combustion and volcanic appearances; for, as we have used and understand the word, the convulsion, in the form he allows it to have taken place, would have been volcanic, and the resulting appearances, which we might at this day expect to find in the neighbourhood, would be such as amply to justify, if not to require, its being described as a volcanic region.*

* Indeed the Neptunians would hold the event to have been volcanic in the strictest scientific sense of the word; for they hold that volcanoes are owing to the inflammation of beds of coal or other combustible matter, and regard them as local or of very limited range. We point out the conformity, without wishing to declare our adherence to the Neptunian or any other geological theory. Our present inquiry does not need any theoretical elucidation.

These observations are of course equally applicable whatever was the ancient extent of the plain in which Sodom stood,—whether it occupied the site of the whole present lake, or only of the bay or "back-water" which forms the southernmost extremity of the same.

The other volcanic appearances about the Lake of Tiberias and in the Eastern country are not accounted for or noticed in the sacred books. It is very possible that the combustion which turned the fertile plain of Siddim into an asphaltic lake was subterraneously propagated, and burst forth in other and distant places; and that they were all thus connected with the same great event which the sacred history records. But they may have been produced, independently, at an earlier or later date; and, if so, we should not expect them to be noticed in Scripture unless they were connected with some *extraordinary* exhibition of Divine power, and intended for the punishment of a guilty people. Its silence would imply that they were not. It is, however, possible that such events may be alluded to by the prophets; although, from the want of historical information on the subject, we may be unable to fix this precise meaning to the texts in which such allusions occur.

(3) SZAFFA, p. 441.—It may be well to introduce here (from Burckhardt) the whole of the information which we at present possess concerning this district.—"The Szaffa is a stony district, much resembling the Ledja, with this difference, that the rocks with which it is covered are considerably larger, although the whole may be said to be even ground. It is two or three days in circumference, and is the place of refuge of the Arabs who fly from the pasha's troops or from the enemies in the desert. The Szaffa has no springs: the rain water is collected in cisterns. The only entrance is through a narrow pass, called Bab el Szaffa, a cleft between high perpendicular rocks, which none ever dared to enter as an enemy. On its western side this district is *El Harra*, a term applied by the Arabs to all tracts which are covered with small stones; being derived from *Harr*, i. e. heat (reflected from the ground)."

CHAPTER IV.—VALLEYS, PLAINS, AND DESERTS.

It has already been shown that the general direction of the great mountain-chains of Syria is from north to south, that being the direction in which the country is most extended. It therefore follows that the great principal valleys, or basins, which separate or run parallel to those mountains, take the same direction. The lateral valleys, which separate the arms or branches of the mountain-chains, and through which their waters pass into the parallel basins, for the most part make a great angle, generally a right angle, with them, and, consequently, have a general direction from east to west, or from west to east.

We have written of the great mountain-chain of Lebanon, and have described its southward prolongation as extending through and dividing the length of Palestine, the backbone of which, so to speak, it forms. Now, the parallel valley or basin of this great central chain, on the *west*, to which all the lateral valleys and all the streams of its western slope tend, is formed by the low lands on the coast facing the Mediterranean. But the great parallel valley on the *east* is formed, first, by the Bekka, or valley between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon; then by the bed of the river Jordan and its lakes; and, lastly, by the great valley of Arabah, which extends from the Dead Sea to the Elanitic Gulf. In this great and extensive basin all the valleys which separate the eastern branches of the great central chain terminate, and through them it receives all the waters which fall from its eastern slopes. This valley is the eastern frontier of Palestine Proper: but taking into account the country beyond it eastward, which we include in our survey, it becomes a central basin, towards which are directed, westward, the valleys and streams of the eastern mountains and high plains. This is, therefore, of more importance, geographically, than even the other principal valley—if it be right to call it a valley—which stretches along the coast; seeing that the lateral valleys of the two principal chains are directed towards it; whereas the valleys and streams of only one slope tend towards the coast.

This being the system of the valleys of Palestine, the obvious course before us is, first, to trace the characteristics of the coast from the north to the south, and then those of the great central valley; after which we shall be in a condition to attend to such of the lateral or subsidiary valleys as require especial notice; and may then conclude with a notice of the plains and deserts of the east and south.

The extent of the line of coast which we shall now follow is from Antaradus (*Tartous*) to the southernmost border of Palestine; reaching, therefore, through about four degrees of latitude (31° to 35°).

Viewed generally, the tract of country through this extent varies considerably in its breadth between the margin of the sea and the lower undulations of the central mountains. In some parts it expands into wide plains, in others it is contracted into narrow valleys, and there are places where the mountain-branches sent forth westward break the continuity of the plain, and stretch forth even into the sea, forming the promontories along the coast. On the other hand, the plain is in some parts indented by bays, which are, however, broad rather than deep, and which nowhere occur to the south of the promontory of Carmel. Most of the smaller indentations of the coast appear to have been worn by the action of the streams where they discharge themselves into the sea.

Throughout this extent the soil, with the exception of some sandy tracts, is surpassingly productive. It is, for the most part, as in most of the fertile parts of Syria, composed of a rich brown garden-mould; although in its northern part there are indications of that red soil which prevails in the extreme north and north-eastern parts of Syria. The climate all along the coast is very warm, and rather insalubrious as compared with the more elevated parts of the country.

After this general statement we may take our journey along the coast, noting such particulars as seem to deserve attention. Our first stage shall be from Tartous to Tripoli, thirty-five miles, through the country of the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Arkites; and Maundrell, Shaw, and Burckhardt must be our guides.

On the land-side, a spacious and pleasant plain extends around Tartous. Travelling from thence, we soon cross the river Marathus, and without stopping to examine the curious antiquities near the Serpent's Fountain, proceed five miles farther, where our attention is arrested by some very ancient and very remarkable sepulchral constructions, in the shape of conical pillars, which might bring to mind "the pillar of Rachel's grave" more markedly than the domed structure which now forms her monument. Shaw says, "The situation of the country round about them has something in it so extravagant and so peculiar to itself, that it can never fail to contribute an agreeable mixture of melancholy and delight to all who pass through it. The uncommon contrast and disposition of woods and sepulchres, rocks, and grottoes: the medley of sounds and echoes from birds and beasts, cascades and waterfalls; the distant roaring of the sea, and the composed solemnity of the whole place, very naturally remind us of those beautiful descriptions which the ancient poets have left us of the groves and retreats of their rural deities."

A little to the south of this spot commences a great plain, to which the people of the country give the name of Jeune, or the Plain, by way of eminency, on account of its great extent. Its length almost reaches to the Cold River (*Nahar el Bered*), while its breadth between the sea and the mountains varies from five to seven leagues. All over this plain are dispersed a great number of castles and watch-towers, erected perhaps as well for the safety and security of those who cultivated it, as to observe the motions of whatever enemy should at any time pitch on it for a seat of action. Such towers are of frequent occurrence in other parts of Syria, and may be the same with "the watch-towers," in contradistinction to the "fenced cities," as they are mentioned in the Scriptures. A representation of one of them has already been given in this work (p. 21). Besides these towers, the Jeune offers several large hillocks of the same figure, and probably raised upon the same occasion with those eminences which we call *barrows* in England. Such monuments occur most frequently on battle-fields; and, certainly, no place can be better supplied with water and herbage and, consequently, more proper either for a field of battle or where an army could be more conveniently encamped. Three rivers* pass through this plain, crossed by bridges of stone.

The Nahar el Bered may be taken as the boundary of this plain southward. Here the eastern mountains, which have been gradually approaching the shore, begin to run parallel to it, at the average distance of a mile; but sometimes stretching out into the sea in small promontories. This is the first near approach of the Lebanon mountains to the shore, by which a remarkable alteration is made in the aspect and disposition of the whole country. The town of Tripoli,† situated upon the declivity of a hill, facing the sea, lies about six miles to the south of this river; and thus our first stage is completed.

Our next shall be from Tripoli to Beirout, fifty-eight miles.‡ Through all this extent, the coast appears to be formed of sand, accumulated by the prevailing westerly winds and hardened into rocks. The valley between the mountains and the sea is, in all this distance, very narrow. The average breadth may be one mile; in very few places does it exceed two miles; and in some parts the mountains run close along the shore, so as to leave only a road between them and the sea. Of the mountain-ridges which threw their extremities towards the sea, the first which conspicuously

* Maundrell makes them four; but he extends the plain nearly to Tripoli. The three are, the *Nahar el Kebir*, or the Great River; *Nahar Abrosh*, or the Leper's River; and *Nahar Akhar*: the fourth, which Maundrell includes among the rivers of the plain, and Shaw does not, is the *Nahar el Bered*, or the Cold River.

† Called *Taraboles* by the natives.

‡ Direct distances are always given; and English statute miles are to be understood, unless geographical miles are specified.

breaks the continuity of the vale, and forms a marked promontory,* is that which terminates in the Ras el Shakkah, which stretches into the sea more than two miles beyond the general line of the coast, and the ascent *over* which, through a deep and rugged pass, is a work of time and difficulty. In the angle of the coast beyond this is the small town of Batroun (the ancient *Bostrys*), at the foot of the hills. which for some miles farther slope quite down to the shore. On crossing the bridge over the winter-torrent of Medfoun, by which we leave the Batroun district, the valley opens a little, and gradually widens as we approach the walled town of Jebail.† Leaving this, the plain, though still narrow, continues to widen slightly. In one place a pleasant grove of oaks skirts the road; and in another we cross a natural bridge, worn by the waters over the bed of a winter-torrent. The river Adonis, so famed in classic fable, also occurs, under the name of Nahar Ibrahim, before we arrive at the northern promontory of the bay of Kesraoun, which again narrows and obstructs the vale. When this promontory has been passed, and we stand on the borders of the bay, the country offers a most interesting aspect. On the one hand are steep and lofty mountains, full of villages and convents built on their rocky sides; and, on the other, the fine bay, with a plain of about a mile in breadth between it and the mountains. This plain is of a sandy soil, but is sown with wheat and barley, and irrigated by water drawn from wells by means of wheels. On approaching the southern promontory of this extensive bay, the country rises and continues hilly with slight interruption for some five miles, in the course of which we pass the Nahar el Kelb ‡ by a stone bridge, about ten minutes' walk above its junction with the sea. From the bridge the road continues along the foot of the steep rocks, except where they overhang the sea, and there it has been cut through the rock by the Romans for about a mile. On clearing this pass we reach a smooth sandy shore, which soon conducts us to the triangular point of land, towards the western extremity of which the town of Beirout § stands. This point projects into the sea about four miles beyond the line of coast, and there is about the same distance in following that line across the base of the triangle.‖

Our next stage shall be one of forty-six miles, from Beirout to Tyre.

Leaving the thriving and important town of Beirout, we cross the root of the tongue of land on which it stands, through cool and pleasant lanes, hedged on both sides with sloping walls of earth crowned with the prickly pear. It takes nearly an hour to clear these, and then we enter upon a sandy tract, occupying the south-western side and angle of this tongue of land, and where the sand has been blown up into low hills, between the road and the shore, by the prevailing westerly winds. The lower hills of Lebanon, on the east, here present a bold and interesting appearance, with a number of villages and detached buildings, and every sign of industrious cultivation. The plain below them is full of olive-trees and lighter verdure; and here a fine grove of pines, planted by the famous Emir Fekhr-ed-Deen, still subsists. The sandy plain is continued for several miles in a gradual descent to the beach; and on leaving it we enter upon a fine plain, about six miles long by four in breadth, which is or was richly set with gardens and orchards even to the base of the eastern hills.

This plain terminates at the river Damoor, the ancient Tamyras. On the other side of that river the eastern mountains approach nearer to the shore, leaving only a narrow rocky way between; and so, for the most part, it continues to the town of Seide (the ancient Sidon), the road now lying along the sandy beach of the sea-shore, and then over rocky paths at a little distance from it. The Nahar el Aoula, which supplies Seide with water, is crossed within a league of that town, on approaching which the valley widens and improves, so that the plain immediately behind it is about two miles wide, and is entirely laid out in extensive and shady groves and gardens with narrow lanes between them. The hills which bound the plain on the east are also fruitful and picturesque; and, upon the whole, this is a very pleasing portion of the line under our survey.

Continuing our journey from Sidon to Tyre,¶ we find the plain gradually narrows. The scenery for most of the way is remarkably simple. On the right hand is the sea; on the left a line of low mountains, the flat intervening plain varying in breadth from 150 to 300 yards. This thinly-peopled and nearly barren tract of country offers little to excite interest, save the ruins—now mere heaps of rubbish—of several large towns, which bring to mind how populous and rich this part of the Phœnician territory once was.

After passing the picturesque Kasmia, the plain becomes more wide; and when we arrive at Tyre, which is not more than a league beyond, it has become between four and five miles wide, backed by hills much higher than those which bound the plain of Sidon. The country has, however, here an air of wildness and desolation; the soil, though not naturally bad, is much injured by negligent tillage, and the total absence of pasture and woodland leaves the surface bare and uninteresting.*

Our next stage along the coast shall be a short one of thirty-six miles,† from Tyre to Mount Carmel.

From the base of the isthmus of Tyre, the southward road traverses part of a fertile plain of considerable extent, and in three-quarters of an hour brings us to the beautiful stream and meadows of Ras el Ain, at which spot most travellers pause to examine the cisterns, which the natives, without the least probability, attribute to Solomon, as they do every remarkable work of which they know not the origin. The best descriptions of them are those supplied by Morison, Nau, and Maundrell. From this place the pure waters were conducted to Tyre by a noble aqueduct, which still exists as a venerable ruin. The eastern mountains are here about a league distant from the shore. This plain continues somewhat narrowing its breadth as we approach the White Cape, ‡ a sublime and picturesque mountain, composed of a calcareous stone as white as chalk. The road over it is occasionally cut through the rock along its side, and is about two yards broad. On the right of this road the rock is covered with bushes, while the left offers a perpendicular precipice to the sea, the scene from which, when the sea rages, is tremendous. This pass is about a mile and a half in length, and has been compared to some of the roads in North Wales. It is perfectly safe, being walled in where necessary. The traditions of the country ascribe this road to Alexander the Great. Having crossed this promontory, we pass for about two hours over a rocky district, and then arrive at the steep and rugged promontory which forms the Cape of Nakhoora, over which the road passes. The ascent of this road, winding over the rugged front of this promontory, reminded Mr. Buckingham very forcibly of similar scenes in Spanish mountains, as well as on the western shores of Portugal: and, here and there, striking resemblances were found to the rocky and sea-beaten shores of Cornwall and Devonshire. On reaching the summit of this promontory, an extensive and beautiful view across the whole plain of Acre opens on us. The elegant and lofty minaret of the city appears at the distance of seven or eight miles directly before us; in the background, far off, twice as distant as the city, is a noble scene;—Mount Carmel dipping its feet in the Western Sea, and, to the east, running considerably inland, entirely locking up from our view the plain of Sharon, which, we know, lies beyond it on the south. In the horizon on the left, the eye rests on the milder mountain scenery which lies on the road to Nazareth. This plain, from the boundaries thus given, is about fifteen miles in length from north to south, and about five in general breadth from the sea-shore to the hills which border it on the east. The soil of this plain resembles the dark loam of Egypt. It is naturally rich, and, in the season, offers a most exuberant natural cultivation, but it is now almost entirely uncultivated. Over an extent of several miles we may perhaps see a solitary Arab turning up what, on the great plain, appeared to be only a few yards of ground. This is natural, for since, from the extortions of the government, the cultivator cannot enjoy the fruits of his own labour, hundreds choose rather to drag out a half-starved existence within the walls of Acre, than to cultivate the rich plain which lies open to any one who might desire to till it. We stop not at the towns of Zib § or Acre, which are situated close to the shore, nor do we pause to drink from the "Fountain of the Blessed Virgin," but, crossing the rivers Belus ‖ and Kishon, arrive at the termination of the plain under Carmel.¶

* The *Theo Prosopon Promontorium* of the ancients.

† The ancient *Byblus*. Originally this appears to have been the seat of the Giblites mentioned in Josh. xiii. 5; Ezek. xxvii. 9.

‡ Dog River, the ancient *Lycus*.

§ The ancient *Berytus*. We shall have future occasions of noticing this and most of the other towns we have named.

‖ The above account of the coast between Tripoli and Beirout is collected from D'Arvieux, Maundrell, Pococke, Burckhardt, and Irby and Mangles.

¶ Now *Soor*, which is just the same as the ancient Hebrew name of Tyre.

* The authorities for the above account of the coast from Beirout to Tyre are—D'Arvieux, ii. c. 22; Maundrell, 43--48; Pococke, part i. c. 20; Buckingham, 'Arab Tribes,' c. 21; Irby and Mangles, 194—202; Joliffe, 'Letters from Palestine,' 5—15; Jowett, 'Syria and the Holy Land,' 124—131.

† The *road* distance is, however, much greater in this instance.

‡ Called *Ras el Abaid* by the natives, classically *Album Promontorium*, and by Europeans *Capo Blanco*.

§ *Achzib* of the Bible; classically *Ecdippa*.

‖ Now *Kardanah*.

¶ The authorities consulted for this account of the country between Tyre and Mount Carmel are—Morison, liv. ii. c. 35; Nau, liv. iii. c. 23; Maundrell, 50—54; Brown, 370, 371; Buckingham, 'Palestine,' c. iii.; Irby and Mangles, 194—198; Jowett, 'Syria and the Holy Land,' 142—144; Stephens, ii. 342, 353.

Our fifth stage shall reach from Mount Carmel to Joppa, fifty-six miles.

It will be remembered that the Mount Carmel is formed by a range of hills coming from the plain of Esdraelon, and ending in the promontory or cape which forms the Bay of Acre. The road, at least that usually taken, winds round the foot of this promontory, and, after having turned its point, we continue our way southward along the sea-coast. The plain here, between the foot of Carmel and the sea, is covered with brushwood, much frequented by various wild animals, particularly boars. In less than a league we reach a cultivated plain, and, after crossing that, pass behind a long range of low sandhills, which show rocky fragments in several parts. These shut out the view of the sea from the road; but it is practicable to travel on the other side of them along the shore. But, if we journey behind them, we ultimately turn out to the shore through a pass cut in these hills through the bed of rock. This pass is called Waad-el-Ajal, the Vale of Death.* It is short, and appears to have been once closed by a gate. It is just broad enough for the passage of a wheeled carriage or a laden camel, with causeways on each side, hewn down on the rock, for foot-passengers. The length of this pass may be about a hundred yards. Beyond it a narrow, sandy flat extends to the sea. Now, turning southward again, along the western side of the bed of rock, through which this pass has been cut, numerous square chambers are seen hewn in the stone. These chambers are small and low, with benches of stone and sometimes concave recesses inside, and cisterns of water near. In particular parts, little flights of steps are provided, leading from one of these caverns to another. These were doubtless intended for habitations; and, as they bear marks of high antiquity, it is not impossible that, as Mr. Buckingham conjectures, they may be counted among those "strongholds near the sea" from which the Hebrews were unable to dislodge the Canaanites.

We travel for two hours along these hills, and then leave them through a wide pass, and enter on a wide plain, which we traverse, passing by the small village of Tortura,† until we reach the ruins of Cæsarea, the Roman capital of Palestine, so often mentioned in the history of the New Testament. The whole plain is, in this part, a sandy desert now; and no human being lives within many miles of the once rich and busy city. Leaving this spot for the present, we continue our way along the shore, chiefly on a sandy beach, with here and there beds of rock towards the sea. Mr. Monro travelled along this beach for two hours, and then, turning up into the plain, found that he had entered the celebrated plain which he describes as "the rich pasture-land of the Valley of Sharon, clothed with fresh verdure as far as the eye can reach. The white clover springs spontaneously, and among a variety of shrubs and flowers were a few dwarf tulips. I observed nothing bearing the appearance of what we call a rose, and unless 'the rose of Sharon' is the *Cistus roseus* of Linnæus, which grows abundantly, I know not what it may be. This tract of land, glorious as it is to the eye, is yet deficient of water in its central part, and for this reason appears not to be frequented even by the Arabs: I traversed it for hours without noticing a single tent.‡ The grass and the flowers spring to waste their sweetness and to fall unseen; and the storks, striding to and fro, are the only animals by which they are visited. The soil is light and the surface elastic; and the uneven foreground swells into hills to the east, which are backed by the mountains of Samaria beyond." This was in spring. To Buckingham, who passed this tract in the depth of winter, it appeared a desert.

In proceeding southward over the plains, which formed, with this, the land of Sharon, various interesting changes are exhibited to our view. As we advance, the pasture-land becomes bordered by a sandy tract, which extends a considerable distance into the grass-land, above which it is elevated about thirteen feet in some places. It has the appearance of an almost perpendicular embankment, to the very foot of which the grass grows luxuriantly. A considerable number of low shrubs grow upon the sand. To this succeeds a cultivated plain, passing from which, by crossing a valley which runs eastward, we reach another more extensive and beautiful plain, covered with trees, and with a carpet of richer verdure than is often seen in Palestine. In this wooded country was situated the town of Sharon, which appears to have given its name to the fine plains which we are describing, and which extend from Cæsarea to Joppa, and from the shore to the hills of Samaria. From this central place, far around, the plains are more extensive, more beautiful, and, to all appearance, more fertile than those of Acre, of Zebulon, and of Carmel. But it should be noted that, as for some time after leaving Cæsarea, so for some time before approaching Jaffa,* the plains are more bare and desert than in the intervening districts. The wooded country which we have mentioned is succeeded by pasture-grounds, such as have been already noticed: but about eleven miles before we reach Jaffa the hills stretch out towards the coast; and a narrow pass through them conducts to an elevated plain, a considerable part of which is under cultivation. From this the road descends to the beach, and proceeds under brown cliffs and hills till, finally, we pass over a desert soil to reach the gates of Jaffa.†

The whole distance between Jaffa and El Arish, on "the river of Egypt," may be despatched in one long stage, of nearly a hundred miles, through the land of the Philistines. In the part which lies between Jaffa and Gaza, the eastern hills approach nearer than in the plains of Sharon. But these hills, although connected by ramifications with the central mountains, have wide plains and valleys behind them and "the hill country of Judea."

It may also be observed that throughout and beyond this extent, though not all the way to El Arish, the plains between the mountains and the sea are less level than they have been, the surface being, for the most part, composed of low undulating hills.

Thus, after we passed through the fine gardens of Jaffa, which extend for a considerable distance in the direction of our road, and which are fenced with hedges of the prickly pear, and abundantly furnished with pomegranate, orange, fig-trees, and water-melons, we find the surface of the ground beautifully undulating. The hills are rather high and partially cultivated; but, upon the whole, the plantations of thistles, which abound throughout this country, are quite as numerous as the fields of grain. About Ashdod, eighteen miles from Joppa, the still undulating ground is covered with rich pastures. The description given by Sandys, which is still applicable, applies to the tract between Ashdod and Gaza:—"The champion betweene about twenty miles, full of flowerie hills ascending leasurely, and not much surmounting their rancker vallies, with groves of olives and other fruites dispersedly adorned. Yet is this wealthy bottom (as are all the rest), for the most part, uninhabited, but onely for a few small and contemptible villages, possessed by barbarous Moores (Arabs), who till no more than will serve to feed them; the grass waist high, unmowed, uneaten, and uselessly withering." As he observes, the country is bare of trees; but when the growth of spring comes, the undulating hills, everything looks fresh and beautiful. "It is not," says Richardson, "like the land of Egypt, but a thousand times more interesting." Askelon is nearly midway in our route between these two places, and the vale in which it lies is peculiarly rich and beautiful. In the spring it is enamelled with flowers, among which our garden-pink assumes the place of daisies. On approaching Gaza, the eye, which has not lately seen much of trees, is charmed by the abundant sycamores and the plantation of old and large olive-trees which surround that interesting spot.

Beyond Gaza the mountains are far inland, though visible in the distance; but the undulation of the ground over which we pass continues. The country as far as Khan Younes, or even Rafah,‡ continues to present the same kind of rural scenery as before,—beautiful undulating fields covered with flocks and herds, and crops of wheat, barley, lentils, and tobacco. Speaking generally of the country which we have thus far traversed, Ali Bey says, "All the country of Palestine § which I saw from Khan Younes to Jaffa is beautiful. It is composed of undulating hills of a rich soil, similar to that of the Nile, and is covered with the richest and finest vegetation. But there is not a single river in all the district; there is not even a spring. All the torrents I crossed were dry,‖ and the inhabitants have no other water to drink than that which they collect in the rainy seasons, nor any other means of irrigation than rain-water and that of the wells, which indeed is very good."

At some distance beyond Rafah the crops get thin and poor, although the general aspect of the country remains the same.

* This may bring to mind the "valley of the shadow of death" of David. Such names are not uncommonly given to gloomy or dangerous vales.

† Probably the Scriptural Dor, the Dora of Josephus.

‡ A mere accident; the tract *is* frequented by Bedouins, though none happened to be there at the time.

* Or, more properly, Yaffa; which is just the old Hebrew name. This is the Joppa of the New Testament.

† The particulars embodied in this account of the coast from Carmel to Jaffa are derived from Buckingham, c. vi.; Monro, i. 60—91; Pococke, i. 15; Nau, liv. i. c. 5; Morison, 544; but chiefly from the two first. Few travellers have tracked the whole way from Carmel to Jaffa; but many have crossed and described the plain of Sharon.

‡ Classically *Raphia.*

§ The reader scarcely need be reminded that the district we are now travelling, from Jaffa, is the original *Palestine,* the land of the Philistines, which gave its name to the whole country.

‖ This was about the middle of July.

But after we have passed the village of Sheikh Juide, three hours beyond Rafah, a perceptible struggle commences between the sand and the grass, or sand and cultivation. The sand gradually gains the superiority during the twenty or twenty-one miles we have still to pass before we reach El Arish, which is seated upon a hill in the midst of drifting sands; and although cultivation struggles to that point, it is discontinued beyond it, and from thence to the borders of the Nile we have only the naked desert of shifting sand, which forms a marked barrier in this direction between Palestine and Egypt. Here, therefore, we shall stop.*

Thus by taking up one set of travellers where another failed, we have been enabled to give such an account of the whole seaward plain as will suffice for the purposes of this work. In now proceeding to the great interior valley, we shall not be able to realize the same advantage. It has been *crossed* by different travellers in various parts, and portions of its length have been traversed, but a very considerable part of its whole extent remains unexplored; it may, nevertheless, be possible, by comparing and combining the observations made at different points, to obtain some tolerably clear notions of the whole.

Our first attention is, of course, required by the great valley or enclosed plain which separates the parallel ranges of Libanus and Anti-Libanus. The vale extends above ninety miles in length, from north to south, and may average about eleven miles in breadth. Its breadth is unusually equal. The widest part is towards the northern extremity, and the narrowest towards the southern. This was the Cœle-Syria, or Hollow Syria, of the ancients, and now bears the name of El Bekaah,† or "the valley," by way of eminence. This valley, by collecting the waters from the mountains on either hand, is abundantly watered by rivulets; almost every village has its spring, all of which descend into the valley, and either lose themselves or join the Liettani (the ancient Leontes), the source of which is between the towns of Zahle and Baalbec, about two hours from the latter place, near a hill called Tel Hushben. The soil is very fertile; and as the mountains concentrate the rays of the sun, a heat in summer is produced scarcely inferior to that of Egypt. Such a combination of water, warmth, and a good soil, produces exuberant fertility everywhere in the East. It does so in the Bekaah, which is hence naturally, perhaps, the most rich and beautiful part of Syria. In La Roque's time the natural beauty and agreeableness of this vale, together with the extensive cultivation and the numerous villages and plantations, rendered it fully comparable to the far-renowned plain of Damascus. But the terrible earthquake of 1759, joined to the subsequent wars with the Turks, brought almost everything to ruin and neglect. But still, even so late as the beginning of the present century, the plain and a part of the mountain, to the distance of a league and a half around the town of Baalbec, were covered with grape plantations: but the oppressions of the governors and their satellites have now entirely destroyed them; and the inhabitants of that place, instead of eating their own grapes, which were renowned for their superior flavour, are obliged to import such as they need from the mountains. The southern part of the vale is now better cultivated than the northern; but even there five-sixths of the soil are left in pasture to the Arabs. The usual produce of the harvest in the vale is tenfold; but in very good years it is often twentyfold. Walnut-trees abound, particularly in the more northerly part of the vale, as do also mulberry-trees. The climate is particularly suited for vines; and the vale formerly and does still to some extent produce those fine and very superior raisins which were exported in all directions under the name of "raisins of Damascus."

Volney says that, notwithstanding the heat of this valley, its air is not at all unhealthy, giving as a proof that the inhabitants sleep without injury upon their house-tops. This salubrity he attributes to the fact that the waters never stagnate, and that the air is perpetually renewed by the north wind. But Burckhardt says, on the contrary, that the air of the valley is far from being healthy. "The chain of Libanus interrupts the course of the westerly winds, which are regular in Syria during the summer months; and the want of these winds renders the climate extremely hot and oppressive." Considering the reputation of the valley, we incline to think that Volney is most probably in the right. Burckhardt was a mountaineer—a Swiss,—and men are apt to judge from their own comparative impressions without reference to positive facts. A climate may be oppressively hot, and yet not unwholesome *to the natives*. The plain of Irak Arabi is far warmer than any part of Syria, and yet a healthier country would be very difficult to find.*

The valley of the Jordan is, of course, the space between the hills on each side of the river and its lakes, without regard to the immediate *bed* of these waters, which will more properly be noticed in the chapter on Lakes and Rivers. Viewing this from above the sources of the Jordan to the end of the Dead Sea, the extent is not under 175 miles. The breadth varies much; in some places it is very inconsiderable, and in others widens into extensive plains. "This valley, through its whole course, is bounded by a chain of mountains on each side. On the *east* they rise almost precipitously from the bed of the river; but on the west there is a fine fertile vale, averaging about half or three-quarters of a mile broad, between the river and the mountain. This does not apply to the Lake of Gennesareth; for there the mountains are close to the lake on each side, with here and there a small beautiful vale opening on the west. The mountains on the east are bolder, and continue with little interruption all the way. On the west side the interruptions are frequent, and charming defiles, irrigated by small streams of water, pass off." This statement is from Dr. Richardson, who tracked more of the course of this valley than any other single traveller; and, in explanation of one point, it is only necessary to remind the reader of our previous statement, that the bolder eminences on the eastern side of the valley are, to a great extent, cliffs, behind which there are not proportional descents, but higher levels than those which the western side of the valley offers. We have also had occasion to state that the valley itself offers the lowest level in all Syria, that level being the lowest of all in the southern parts. Some idea of this most extraordinary depression of the valley may be formed from the facts that while Jerusalem, on the western mountains, is 2600 feet, and Jerash, on the eastern plain, is 2000 feet *above* the level of the Mediterranean, the plain of Jericho, at Rihhah, is 700 feet, and the Jordan itself, before it reaches the Dead Sea, is 1269 feet *below* the same level. The consequence of this is a degree of heat in the valley comparable to that of the valley of the Nile; which, with the presence of water, exhibits the usual effect in the most exuberant fertility, under proper treatment, with a profuse manifestation of vegetable products which, out of the valley, can only be found in a more southern latitude. Here, also, the seasons are more advanced than in the more elevated tracts of country on either hand; so that, upon the whole, the vale of the Jordan may be regarded as a zone of almost tropical country extending through what may be called a temperate clime.

As we consider that the valley of the Jordan may take its commencement from the angle formed by the divergence of Jebel es-Sheikh from the main chain of Anti-Libanus, we shall there commence the rapid survey of it we now purpose to take.

The commencing valley thus formed seems to be called Wady Ityne, though it also bears the name of its principal town, Hasbeya. This vale has a general direction N.N.E and S.S.W., and varies in breadth from two to three miles. Its level is often interrupted by small hillocks, but it is well cultivated throughout with corn, vines, and olives, and is full of villages, peopled wholly by Druses and Christians in nearly equal numbers. They rear silkworms on a very extensive scale, and for their sake the mulberry-tree is largely cultivated.

At the end of this valley the mountains approach each other, having only a narrow passage for the stream from Hasbeya. They then diverge again, and stretch wide apart, to form what is usually considered the commencement of the Jordan valley; but which, geographically, had better be regarded as the basin and plain of the lake Huleh. The plain, without the lake of that name, is from nine to twelve miles in breadth, by about twenty in length. This beautiful plain, enclosed by high mountains, and backed in one

* Our guides through the land of the Philistines have been—Richardson, Mangles [these alone traversed its whole extent], Sandys, and Ali Bey: Zuallart, D'Arvieux, and Roger [whose account has been occupied by Surius], have also been consulted; but the route along the coast from Jaffa, southward, was not much frequented by the older travellers. Dapper, in his "Syrie en Palestyn," has a very full account of the land of the Philistines (pp. 211—229), historical and geographical, comprising, perhaps, all the information which existed prior to the eighteenth century.

† The word means a valley or low plain in Hebrew, Syriac, and Arabic, and is expressly applied in the Scriptures to this very valley. See Josh. xi. 17; xii. 7; and Ezek. xxxvii. 1, 2, where the words rendered, very properly, "the valley of Lebanon," are literally "the Bekaah of Lebanon." The northern part, in which Baalbec is situated, is called, distinctively, Belad (district, province) Baalbec; but El Bekaah applies to the *whole* valley, although it is more frequently heard with reference to the southern half, which has no distinctive name. This led Burckhardt into what we conceive to be the error of supposing the name El Bekaah was confined to that portion, and to divide it into two parts, El Bekaah and Belad Baalbec. La Roque and Volney, who both resided long in Lebanon, consider the first of these names to comprehend the whole extent of the valley.

* This account of the great valley of Lebanon has been drawn up chiefly from the brief particulars afforded by La Roque, Volney, Burckhardt, and Elliot. Dandini has nothing of any value on the subject.

direction by the snowy heights of Hermon (Jebel es-Sheikh), is watered by the river of Hasbeya and the Jordan, as also by several rivulets which descend from the mountains. The soil is most fertile. It is covered everywhere with the richest pastures, to which some Arab tribes and the Toorkmans bring their cattle. Only a very small part is under cultivation; and the crops of wheat and barley here, as in other parts of the Jordan valley, are the finest which can anywhere be seen. Thistles abound here, as on the coast; and so tall and gigantic are they as to annoy those who ride through the plain, as they reach to the saddles of the horses. The hills around are to a very considerable extent covered with oaks.

Beyond this plain, southward, the hills approach, or rather the western hills incline towards, the eastern cliffs, having a comparatively narrow valley or plain to connect the basin of Lake Huleh with that of the Lake of Gennesareth. This is a fine undulating plain, amply covered with weeds and thistles; but with a soil capable of any species of cultivation.

The mountains open again as we draw near the great Lake of Gennesareth; but the basin thus formed is little more than sufficient for its waters, so that a narrow vale between their brink and the foot of the enclosing mountains is all the space afforded. The eastern side had never been, till of late years, visited by travellers; and we were told that the vale only existed on the western side, and that the feet of the eastern mountains were bathed by the waters. But this is now known not to be the fact.

The north-western as well as the southern shore of the lake is generally sandy; but, passing down on the western side, we soon come to the plain, which reaches to the town of Tiberias, and which may average nearly a mile in breadth. The streams which come down from the mountains, and cross this plain to enter the lake, occasion a luxuriant herbage along its borders. The pastures of the sloping meadows which form this plain are proverbial for their richness among the inhabitants of the neighbouring districts. It is, indeed, exceedingly fertile, but for the most part uncultivated. The waste parts are covered with the rankest vegetation, —reeds, nebbek-trees, oleanders, honeysuckles, wild-flowers, and splendid thistles in immense crops. There are fig-trees, and a few palm-trees occur here and there. Approaching Tiberias,* we pass the warm mineral springs, which have already been noticed in this work; and, in the vicinity of the town, we find the plain and the lower slopes of the hills under cultivation. The heat of the climate would allow the inhabitants to grow almost any tropical plant; but the only products of their fields are wheat, barley, dhourra, tobacco, melons, grapes, and a few vegetables. The melons are of the finest quality, and are in great demand at Acre and Damascus, where the fruit is nearly a month later in ripening. The climate here, and generally on the borders of the lake, is extremely hot, and is alleged by Burckhardt to be unhealthy, as the mountains impede the free course of the westerly winds, which prevail throughout Syria in the summer. Hence intermittent fevers, especially those of the quartan form, are very common at that season. Little rain falls in winter; snow is almost unknown on the borders of the lake, and the temperature appears to be nearly the same as that of the Dead Sea.

Under the altered circumstances of Syria, Lord Lindsay was enabled to accomplish that examination of the *eastern* margin of the lake which Seetzen attempted in vain.† And as the result of his survey, he tells us that, "So far from finding the road rugged or difficult, it was far easier than on the western bank; in fact, by far the best we have ever travelled in Syria—lying entirely through meadows, covered with corn, that descended to the water's edge;—and this description applies to the whole eastern side of the lake; the western is much more rugged and precipitous. Nothing can exceed the beauty of the lake and opposite mountains, at sunset; the view from Tiberias is quite tame in comparison."

What is most usually called the Ghor, or Valley, of the Jordan, is that part which lies between the two lakes of Gennesareth and Asphaltites, the direct distance between which is about sixty-five miles. This beautiful plain is five or six miles across in the northern half, but widens greatly in its progress to the Dead Sea. It occurred to Seetzen that this plain of El Ghor greatly resembled that of El Bekaah (already described), save that the mountains which enclose the Bekaah are far more grand than those which bound the Jordan valley. The great number of rivulets which descend from the mountains on both sides of the Ghor, and form numerous pools of stagnant water, produce in many places a pleasing verdure and a luxuriant growth of wild herbage and grass; but the greater part of the ground is a parched desert, of which a few spots only are cultivated by the Bedouins. In the neighbourhood of Bysan (*Bethshan*) the soil is entirely of marl; there are very few trees, but wherever there is water high reeds are found. The river itself flows in a valley about three-quarters of a mile in breadth, which is considerably lower than the rest of the plain of the Ghor; and this lower valley is covered with high trees and a luxuriant verdure, which afford a striking contrast with the sandy slopes which border it on both sides. Except for the town of Bysan, and the village of Rihhah (Jericho?), the plain is wholly unoccupied, unless by the Bedouins.

On approaching the Asphaltic Lake, the distance between the opposite mountains, as already intimated, is greatly increased—leaving between them and the river, on the east the plains of Moab, and on the west the large plain of Jericho. As almost all the pilgrims and travellers in the Holy Land have made it a point to visit the Jordan,—to reach which, from Jerusalem, they must cross this plain,—there are few parts of Palestine which have been more frequently described. This plain is very extensive, probably eighteen miles in extreme length, by a breadth of seven or eight miles. It is bounded, internally, by tall mountains, which form a kind of bow by bending westward in their course from north to south. Of this bow the Jordan is as the chord. Beyond the river, eastward, are other mountains, as high or higher than these, and still more distant from the river; the whole making the plain appear as the arena of an amphitheatre. The circle of enclosing mountains causes an extraordinary degree of heat in the plain, by the concentration and reflection of the sun's rays. The almost tropical warmth of this plain may also be partly ascribed to the sandy nature of its soil, the great depression of its surface, the obstruction which the enclosing mountains offer to the passage of the external breezes, and in some degree to the aridity of the sides and summits of these mountains; for, as well observed by Mariti, heat is reflected with much greater force from such than from fertile or cultivated hills. The heat is so very strong, that so early as the latter end of April it deprived Morison of his appetite and sleep; and Nau, so late as October, found even the nights oppressively warm.

The soil of the plain is almost entirely composed of sand; but beyond Rihhah, to the north and to the east, it seems to be better, and not unfertile. But the soil of the whole plain, the fertility of which has been so much extolled by various Latin writers, is not naturally fertile. All the richness it ever had, or yet, in some quarters, retains, has been owing to the spring of Elisha, which, in such a climate, rendered even this poor soil most productive wherever its waters came; and certainly the appearance which it formerly offered, when these waters were dispersed far around in numerous irrigating rills, must have been very different from that which it exhibits now, when, with the exception of some fruitful spots, the whole presents an arid and desolate appearance, and only one poor stunted palm-tree can be found within view of the ancient "city of palms."

Going down towards the head of the Dead Sea, the soil is still barren, but ceases to be sandy, having a surface of dark-coloured earth, which might be taken for *alluvium*, but that it produces nothing but a few solitary desert plants, and seems as if included in the curse which overthrew the cities of the plain. It is much intersected by deep torrents, and crusted at the top, as if flooded occasionally by the swellings of the Jordan or washed by copious rains.

The Dead Sea is hemmed in on the west by the mountains of Judea, and on the east by those of Moab. Of these mountains, and of the mineral products of this region, we have already written; and our attention must now be confined to the vale which is left, on the east and on the west, between the margin of the lake and the feet of the mountains. The plain on the east side, which continues to bear the name of El Ghor, varies in breadth from one to four miles. It is not so entirely a desolation as the common descriptions of the lake would lead us to suppose. It has many fertile spots, particularly towards the south, and is to a great extent covered with forests, in the midst of which the miserable peasants who inhabit there build their huts of rushes, and cultivate their fields of dhourra and tobacco. The spots not cultivated are, for the most part, sandy; so that there is but little pasturage, and the camels feed principally upon the leaves of trees. The resident peasants may amount to about three hundred families. They live very poorly, owing to the continual exactions of the neighbouring Bedouins, who descend in winter from the mountains of Belka and Kerek, and pasture their cattle amidst their fields. The heat of the climate in this low

* Now pronounced *Tabaria*, or *Tabareah*.

† Seetzen seems to say he had succeeded. He certainly did *visit* the eastern shore, but did not traverse its extent. From the north he went a little way down the eastern side to an Arab camp, but was obliged to return; and from the south he went up the eastern shore as far as Feik, but the extensive tract *between* these two points he did not see.

valley, during the summer, renders it almost uninhabitable. The people then go nearly naked; but their low huts rather increase the mid-day heat than afford shelter from it.

The character of the plain on the western border of the lake was perfectly unknown until lately visited by Professor Robinson and the Rev. Eli Smith. All that former travellers could state amounted to some general impression formed from the partial and obscure view taken from the head of the lake. The American travellers advanced from the west to a point near the southern extremity of the lake, where the name of Ain Jiddy points out to us the Engeddi of the Bible. The first obtained a view of the lake from the summit of a precipitous cliff, overhanging Engeddi and the lake at the height of at least 1500 feet. From this point we will copy their statement, with the omission of some parts which we shall require for another purpose:—

"The Dead Sea lay before us in its vast deep chasm, shut in on both sides by precipitous mountains, and, with its low projecting points and flat border towards the south, resembling much a long winding bay, or the estuary of a large river when the tide is out and the shoals left dry. We descended to the shore by a pass more steep, rugged, and difficult than is to be found among the Alps, and pitched our tent near a fine large fountain which bursts out upon a narrow terrace still four hundred feet above the sea. The water of the fountain is beautifully transparent, but its temperature is 81° of Fahrenheit.

"The whole descent below the fountain was apparently once terraced for gardens; and the ruins of a town are to be seen on the right. The whole slope is still covered with shrubs and trees of a more southern clime. Nothing is needed but tillage to render this a most prolific spot. The soil is rich, the heat great, and water abundant. The approach to the sea is here over a bank of pebbles, several feet higher than the level of the water as we saw it. The phenomena around the sea are such as might be expected from the nature of its waters and the character of the region round about,—for the most part a naked dreary waste.

"Next morning we were compelled to re-ascend the pass in order to proceed northward along the shelving table-land above; the projecting cliffs cutting off all passage below along the water. At night we encamped again on a cliff one thousand feet above the sea, overhanging the fountain Turabeh, which is below on the shore.

"We continued our course next day, descending again by a difficult pass; and after travelling several hours along the shore and over the plain, the soil of which is here in many parts like ashes, we arrived at the lower fords of the Jordan."

We have now to examine the great valley of Arabah, which extends between the Asphaltic Lake and the Red Sea. The account which we have already given (p. 423) of the mountains which enclose this valley, was intentionally made to include such information as we possessed concerning the valley itself, that it might not be necessary again to return to it. But since then the Count de Bertou has communicated to the public a very interesting account of a journey made by him, in April, 1838, throughout the whole extent of the valley from north to south. As he is the only European who has seen the whole of this important valley, and as his conclusions are adverse to those of the travellers who, from Burckhardt downward, have only seen it in parts, it is desirable that we should report the more important of his observations.*

It is only necessary to premise that, as we have more than on one occasion stated, Burckhardt saw good reason to conclude that the Jordan once flowed through this valley to the Red Sea, and that all subsequent travellers, till M. de Bertou, have acquiesced in this conclusion.

The name El Ghor for a time is continued to the plain or valley south of the Dead Sea. M. de Bertou, on reaching the southern end of that lake, found the Ghor to be from two to three miles wide, and travelled over a plain covered with salt at the foot of salt-hills.† These hills diminish in height to the southward, and form the foreground to higher ranges behind them; they are in every part furrowed by salt-torrents, which flow in winter and inundate the plain. Seven miles‡ from the end of the Dead Sea the Count reached the chain of low hills, which since the morning had appeared to him the limit of El Ghor, and *to close it up, by uniting the mountains of salt to those of Arabia. These hills are from sixty to seventy feet in height, and composed of a whitish and very friable sandstone*: they form the buttresses or outworks (*contreforts*) of the desert, which stretches to the south, and is known by the name of Wady Arabah: they are channelled by numerous small streams, which fall into El Ghor and eventually into the Dead Sea. Just before reaching these hills the guides turned suddenly to the right, and cried out, "Wady Arabah, Wady Arabah!" and then the party entered this celebrated valley. M. de Bertou confesses that this valley had at first the appearance of the bed of a great river; and *if its slope were not visible towards the Dead Sea*, one would exclaim on seeing it, "This is really the bed of the Jordan:" it is, however, he tells us, the bed of a torrent which flows in an opposite direction, namely, from south to north, and falls into El Ghor. There was no water in it. Its breadth, which is from two hundred and fifty to three hundred yards, is filled with tamarisks: it extends in a S.W.S. direction, and is bounded by almost vertical banks of grey freestone about one hundred and fifty feet in height. In the continuation of this valley the hills on the right appear to be more furrowed than those on the left. This, however, which Bertou incorrectly describes as the Wady Arabah, is the Wady el-Jeib of Dr. Robinson, and is described by him as "a wady within a wady." It is in fact the great gully or channel which the waters have worn in their descent from the higher elevation of the Wady Arabah, south, to the lower level of the Ghor, or bed of the Dead Sea, north, through the cliffs which bound that basin on the south. Consequently the Wady Arabah is not entered till we have passed through this Wady el-Jeib from the lower to the higher level.

After proceeding eleven miles, the travellers came in sight of Mount Hor in the distance. Still advancing, the Wady became broader, and assumed the aspect of a desert; the hills on each side decreased in height, and the plain seemed to ascend. At twelve miles the banks of the valley to the left disappeared, and on the right distant mountains were perceived to the S.W. At eighteen miles a pause was made at a spring of tolerable water for the Desert, at the point where the valley is crossed by the road from Petra to Hebron. As the Count did not diverge to Petra, but continued straight on towards Akabah, his route even from this point continued to be one not in modern times trodden by Europeans.

After travelling some miles from the well, the valley becomes about 1500 yards wide; and at ten miles from that well, another was reached of the temperature of 59° Fahrenheit, the water being detestable both in taste and smell. Near this spring is a rock of soft reddish freestone, 70 feet high, covered with the names, or rather marks, of the Arabs who pass by this road. Beyond this the ground is covered with flint pebbles; all vegetation has disappeared; and the Wady is gradually lost in the slightly undulating plain which extends towards the mountains in the east. And here, to prevent confusion, it may be proper to apprise the reader that our previous statements embraced the whole breadth of plain to the eastern hills of Seir; whereas the Count, to this point, limits his statement to the comparatively narrow valley of the torrent on its western border.

The next morning the travellers passed on the right the Wady Talh (Acacia Vale), which extends to the westward, and which the Arab guides pointed out as the road to Egypt, being in fact the route which Burckhardt followed in 1812, when he went from Wady Mousa to Cairo. "From the junction of the Wady Talh," says M. de Bertou, "the Arabs give the name of Akabah (the Ascent) to the southern prolongation of the Wady Arabah, so that *this spot would seem to be the line which separates the waters flowing to the Dead Sea from those discharged into the Red Sea. Indeed it is impossible to mistake the two slopes, one to the north and the other to the south.*" Dr. Robinson denies this change of name, and inclines to place the watershed a few miles more to the south; but the fact of the existence of this watershed is equally affirmed by both, and is a strong point against the notion that the Jordan could ever have flowed to the Elanitic Gulf.

From this point the road continued to be covered with small black flints, and with large but withered roses of Jericho. After having passed the Wady Ghurundel, the travellers continued their journey against the simoom wind, which brought with it a quantity of fine sand, with which the plain is covered. The day following brought them to the spring of Ghadiyan, which is strongly impregnated with sulphur.

To this point, it will be observed, the route of Count de Bertou has been over ground untrodden by any modern European, except where Burckhardt *crossed* it in his way from Petra to Egypt, and where Stephens and Lord Lindsay *crossed* it in their way from

* The account of this journey which we employ is that given in vol. ix. pp. 277—286, of the 'Journal of the Royal Geographical Society.' The article is entitled, 'Notes of a Journey from Jerusalem to Hebron, the Dead Sea, El Ghor, and Wadi-Arabah to Akabah, and back by Petra, in April, 1838. By the Count de Bertou.'

† We may here mention that the saline plain around the southern extremity of the Dead Sea appears to be the scriptural "*Valley of Salt*," 2 Kings xiv. 7.

‡ So the account which we cite; but the *map* in the same Number of the 'Geographical Journal' makes the distance not less than twelve miles.

Petra to Hebron. For the motive which has led travellers to enter the Wady Arabah has been the visit to Petra, which visit has always been made from Akabah. And the road from Akabah to Petra lies along the western side of the great valley only as far as this spring; then it inclines over to the eastern hills to reach Wady Mousa, in which Petra lies. Returning thence, the route again inclines over to the western hills, to reach the roads to Cairo, Gaza, or Hebron,—that is, merely to get out of the valley westward, not to travel along its western border. Hence the peculiar claim of M. de Berton is, that he has traversed the western edge of the valley *through its whole extent.*

Below the spring of Ghadiyan, the valley is spread out into a great plain, covered with small gravel of porphyry and granite; twenty-four miles through which brings the traveller to Akabah. As this great valley was traversed by the Hebrews in their pilgrimage, it is interesting to read the first feeling of the traveller who arrives at Akabah after having passed through it:—"The luxury of having fresh water in abundance, after having been obliged for eight days to drink water impregnated with brimstone, and exhaling an odour of rotten eggs, and for the last two days even to have occasionally wanted that, is not easily imagined by those who have not experienced it; and when we saw the sakka (water-carrier) come to water the ground both within and without our tents, we could not help exclaiming against the apparent waste of so precious a fluid."

The return route of M. de Berton by Petra, to Hebron, is the same which other travellers have taken, and does not here require to be noticed. It offers no new facts—nor, perhaps, were any thought needful—in support of his grand conclusion, afterwards confirmed by Dr. Robinson, that, "*in the present state of things, the Jordan never could have flowed into the Elanitic Gulf.*"

We must honestly confess that we have received this announcement with more pain and reluctance than we ever thought that a mere geographical fact could possibly occasion. In the next chapter we shall have a more suitable occasion than now offers of subjecting it to the examination which it requires, and to receive it without murmuring, if we find that it must be received; even though, in its obvious consequences, it overturns a most satisfactory and beautiful explanation, on which the mind could repose, of very serious difficulties, and revives them into greater force than they even formerly possessed.

We shall now proceed to notice the valleys and plains of Palestine, which extend laterally between the two great longitudinal lines which we have now traced. In executing this part of our work, we purpose to include in our survey all the plains and valleys which are of Scriptural or historical consequence, even though they may be of small geographical importance. We shall, as before, proceed from north to south.

Of the plains and valleys in the northern part of Palestine—that is, in Galilee besides those which have already been noticed in our survey of the two principal lines—our information is very scanty. In this, as in other cases, our information decreases with our distance from Jerusalem - that great centre of all interest and inquiry connected with the Holy Land.

Many of the valleys of Galilee are small, but beautifully wooded, and the villagers who occupy them seem to be among the most happily situated of the inhabitants of Palestine.

Speaking generally of this part of Galilee, which belonged to the tribe of Zebulon, Clarke says, "The scenery is to the full as delightful as in the rich vales upon the south of the Crimea; it reminded us of the finest parts of Kent and Surrey. The soil, although stony, is exceedingly rich, but it is now entirely neglected."

THE VALLEY OF ABILENE is the first of the vales which lie beyond the hills which skirt the coast between Cape Nakhoora and Acre. It is long and narrow, and bounded by low hills covered chiefly with oak.

The vale which is particularly distinguished as the VALLEY OF ZEBULON, lies to the south-east of this, and is the first vale immediately from the plain of Acre. It is of somewhat an oval figure, and between three and four miles in length by one in breadth. This valley must have been a treasure to the tribe of Zebulon, to which it belonged, and by which it was doubtless well cultivated. Although now under very partial cultivation, the natural fertility of the soil may be easily estimated by the dense abundance of the plants, field-flowers, and herbs which it spontaneously produces. The enclosing hills are beautifully wooded, chiefly with the Carob-tree and a sort of oak with whitish leaves. The pasturage of the vale is accounted among the finest in the Holy Land.

THE VALE OF SEPPHORIS takes its name from the city of Sepphoris, also called Dio Cæsarea, which Josephus describes as the chief city of Galilee. It still survives as a village, and continues to bear its old name in the slightly different form of Sephoury. This vale is separated by hills from that of Zebulon, which is to the west of it; and it is on these hills that the town of Sephoury stands. This valley is about the same length as that of Zebulon, and forms a very fine plain, the verdure of which in the spring is most striking, abundantly enamelled with an endless variety of flowers, among which tulips of every colour are most conspicuous. The town and valley are celebrated for several circumstances in the later history of the Jews, and in the wars between the Moslems and the Christian kings of Jerusalem.

The small VALE OF NAZARETH, in which Jesus Christ was born and passed his early years, claims to be noticed on that account. It is a kind of hollow or basin, formed by enclosing mountains of no great height. "It seems," says Dr. Richardson, "as if fifteen mountains met to form one enclosure for this delightful spot; they rise around it like the edge of a shell to guard it from intrusion. It is a rich and beautiful field in the midst of barren mountains. It abounds in fig-trees, small gardens, and hedges of the prickly pear, and the dense grass affords an abundant pasture. The village stands on an elevated situation on the western side of the valley, and contains between six hundred and seven hundred inhabitants." This picture is in agreement with that which other travellers have drawn. Lord Lindsay thinks them all too highly coloured.

The declivity from the central hills of Galilee towards the great valley of the Jordan is formed by a succession of narrow plains rising one above another from the valley of that river. Here the soil is everywhere a fine black mould, deep, and perfectly free from stones, and appearing in such a climate capable of almost any production, were but the hand of man applied to it.

Behind the hills which bound the Lake of Gennesareth on the west there are some valleys which tradition indicates as the scenes of some of the transactions in the history of Jesus Christ, which certainly must have occurred somewhere in the neighbourhood. One of these is that in which Christ is supposed to have multiplied the seven loaves and fishes. (Matt. xv. 32.) This valley is long and of moderate width. The extremity, which advances towards the Lake of Gennesareth, is between Tiberias and Bethsaida. It is a fine valley, with green and abundant grass, and well capable of containing, seated thereon, a great number of people. The hill on which our Lord is alleged to have stood when he blessed the loaves and fishes, is of less height than some of those on the opposite side of the valley. It bears the somewhat odd name of "La Table de la Multiplication," according to Nau, who with his party sat down and ate a commemorate morsel of bread on the spot.*

From the top of this hill is visible the alleged Mount of Beatitudes, of which we have already spoken, and which it is only necessary to mention further for the sake of stating that it stands detached in the midst of an extensive plain, greatly elevated above the level of the Jordan, from which cause even the low summits found here command extensive prospects in different directions.

From hence the road westward to Cana lies over a succession of broad valleys for nearly three hours. In one of these, about two miles from Cana, an old terebinth-tree is pointed out as marking the field in which the disciples of Christ occasioned a dispute with the Pharisees by plucking ears of corn on the sabbath day. (Luke vi.) This is a fertile champaign, and is, or was, under partial cultivati

Before leaving this part of the country, it may be well to notice the extensive valley or plain which lies behind the hills which bound

* The accounts of some of our own travellers differ from this and from one another about the alleged scene of this miracle. The old Catholic travellers, especially when priests or monks, were certain that they were at the spots which their traditions (whether right or wrong) indicated, and could not be deceived. But our own Protestant or sceptical travellers—and, as such, indifferent or doubtful—might, at the convenience of their guides, have almost any sight or object pointed out to them as that for which they inquired. So between wrong indications on the one hand, and from misunderstanding the tradition when the right indication has been given, on the other, they often manage to arrive at a very strong conclusion concerning the doltish knavery of those who settled the sites of such transactions. Now, men are seldom such dolts as travellers think them. In the present case a wrong site seems to have been shown to some, while others have understood that it was exhibited as the scene of the multiplication of the *five* loaves and the fishes, which they triumphantly tell us must have taken place on the opposite or eastern side of the lake. But all the old Catholic travellers say that it was the miracle of the *seven* loaves, not of the *five* loaves, which took place here. Most of them were quite aware of the difference between the sites of the two miracles, and Father Nau has as clear and able an explanation on the subject as can possibly be given. We are far from undertaking to say that this was really the site of the miracle in question. That is a matter with which we have nothing to do in the present work; but it appears to us as probable a site as could possibly be indicated in the neighbourhood.

the northern extremity of the Lake of Gennesareth, on the western side. Richardson, the only traveller who has passed this plain since Pococke, describes it as "an extensive open field, which bore an abundant crop of thistles, and in which herds of black cattle were feeding." This is in conformity with the accounts of the old travellers. It is, in fact, an extensive plain, forming a rich pasture-ground, on which account it seems, in all times, to be much frequented by the Bedouins with their flocks. It bears the name of Dothan, from a village so called, and is regarded by the inhabitants of Palestine, as well as by the Jews, as the ground on which the sons of Jacob were pasturing their flocks when they sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites. We are told, in the sacred narrative, that Joseph had expected to find them near Shechem, but, on arriving there, heard that they had removed their flocks to Dothan, and went there to seek them. That this plain is the Dothan in question has been disputed, on the ground of the distance from Hebron and from Shechem. The town of Shechem is two days and a half, or three days' journey from Hebron, and this present plain is about an equal distance from Shechem. To counterbalance this, there are the facts— that this plain is a famous pasture-ground, and that it lies on the road to a well-known place of passage over the Jordan (where there is now a bridge, called Jacob's Bridge); so that it is a very likely place for the Ishmaelite traders to have passed in their way to Egypt. Whatever be the probabilities of the question, the objections, founded solely on the distances stated, do not deserve attention, when the habits of the migratory shepherds are taken into account. Such writers, therefore, as Nau and Morison, long resident in the country, and well acquainted with Bedouin habits, are more in the right, when they refer to such habits as explaining the distance, than Richardson, who, with a palpable reference to the habits of another condition of life, remarks:— "This is a long way from Hebron for the sons of Jacob to go to feed their herds, and a still further way for a solitary youth like Joseph to be sent by his father in quest of them." But Joseph was *not* sent by his father to Dothan, but only to Shechem, and Joseph, of his own accord, went to Dothan when he could not find them there.— But we will not be tempted into these questions; and we beg it to be understood that, in mentioning a particular spot as the alleged scene of this or that transaction, we feel it no part of our present duty to examine the truth or probability of the allegation, unless when some point of public history is involved, of sufficient importance to render such an examination expedient. But we may say, generally, that in all such cases we should, in the first instance, be disposed to consider the current determinations of sites to be right, unless we could find some good reasons to conclude them wrong —rather than, with some travellers and writers, deem them all, in the first instance, to be wrong, until we find good reasons for believing them correct.

We shall now leave this northern division of Palestine, and proceed to the great central plain which divides Galilee and Samaria.

The Plain of Esdraelon, known in Scripture as the "Plain of Megiddo," measures about thirty miles in length, from east to west, and eighteen in breadth, from north to south. On the north it is bounded by the mountains of Galilee, and on the south by those of Samaria; on the eastern part, by Mount Tabor, the Little Hermon, and Gilboa; and on the west by Carmel, between which range and the mountains of Galilee is an outlet whereby the river Kishon winds its way to the bay of Acre. Professor Robinson, in his 'Biblical Researches in Palestine,' informs us that the eastern part of the plain has never yet been correctly laid down in the maps. "Two mountain ridges run out into it from the east, commencing near the brow of the Jordan valley, and extending westward to near the middle of the plain. The southern ridge is Gilboa, and the north is the Little Hermon of Jerome. They divide the eastern half of the plain into three parts; of which the northern and southern decline towards the west, and their waters flow off to the Kishon, while the middle portion, between Gilboa and Hermon, slopes to the east, and its waters descend to the Jordan through a broad valley, or plain, at Bysan, the ancient Bethshan." This central valley, or plain, may, we suppose, be the Valley of Jezreel, so often mentioned in Scripture, although that name appears to have been sometimes applied in a large sense to the whole plain of Esdraelon.

This great plain possesses the elements of great fertility, having a rich alluvial soil, about three feet deep, resting on a substratum of gravel and whitish limestone. As seen from above, it is not a perfect level, but a tract of gentle undulations, in the midst of the hills which enclose it on every side. It is destitute of trees; but so rich and spontaneously fertile is the soil, that Morison thinks that, if it were cultivated as it ought to be, it would alone suffice to supply the whole of Galilee with corn, even were that province as populous now as it was in ancient times. But, he says, it was in his time almost entirely uncultivated, although so covered with green herbage as to evince what Nature could do if seconded by man. It is difficult to account for this last intimation, as other writers, before and after Morison, describe the plain as being to a considerable extent under cultivation. Zuallart implies that much was cultivated, and the remainder left to pasturage; for he describes it as affording abundance of corn, wine, oil, herbage, and all things necessary to the life of man or beast. D'Arvieux, who was there in May, when the corn had nearly reached maturity, says that when one looks over the plain from an eminence, and sees the immense surface of corn in motion from the breeze, a lively image of the agitations of the sea is presented to him. It is still probably cultivated to the same extent. In early spring, Major Skinner saw the plains green in all directions with the rising grain. Another recent traveller, whose name we forget, describes much of it, particularly in the eastern part, as furrowed by the plough. Yet Clarke speaks of it as "one vast meadow, covered with the richest pastures." From all this we collect that there is much pasture-ground, and much cultivation in the plain: and those who describe it as uncultivated, but rich in natural herbage, passed through those parts only which were in this state, and inferred all the rest to be like it, as they could not well, in the wide general survey from an eminence, distinguish, in so fertile a plain, the cultivated from the uncultivated parts, especially after the crops have been gathered in.

In the distribution of Canaan to the people of Israel, by Joshua, this celebrated portion fell to the lot of Issachar, who in its fertile and well-watered soil had abundant cause to "rejoice in their tents" (Deut. xxxiii. 18). And at this day some of the more peaceably inclined Bedouin tribes are seen living under tents, surrounded by their flocks, for the sake of the rich pastures it affords. Thus the latter end of the country is like its beginning. *Then* the old patriarchs wandered with their flocks among the towns and villages of Canaan, and fed them, even in the peopled districts, without molestation. This was before the country had become populous; and now the same thing is witnessed when, after having been most populous, it has again become thinly peopled.

The historical celebrity of this plain is very great. It is that "mighty plain"—*μεγα πεδιον* as it is called by many ancient writers—which has in all ages been the famous battle-ground of nations. In the first ages of the Jewish history, as well as during the Roman empire, the Crusades, and even in later times, it has been the scene of many a memorable contest. In this great plain, Barak, descending with ten thousand men from Mount Tabor, fought with the kings of Canaan, "by the waters of Megiddo." Here king Josiah was slain in battle with the Egyptians. And "it has been the chosen place for encampment in every contest carried on in this country," to use the words of Dr. Clarke, "from the days of Nebuchodonosar, king of the Assyrians, until the disastrous march of Napoleon Buonaparte from Egypt into Syria. Jews, Gentiles, Saracens, Crusaders, Egyptians, Persians, Druses, Turks, Arabs, and French, warriors out of every nation which is under heaven, have pitched their tents upon the plain of Esdraelon, and have beheld their banners wet with the dews of Tabor and of Hermon."

The country of Samaria, situated between Galilee and Judea, has been much less explored than either. Pilgrims and travellers have crossed and re-crossed Judea and Galilee in every direction, in order to visit the different spots of sacred or historical interest which are dispersed in them. But the only points in Samaria which the sacred history has made memorable are about Shechem and Samaria, which are not more than four miles from each other and as no other part of the country has been thought worthy of attention, no route but that which includes these two places has been followed. Content to look at Shechem and Samaria in their way, pilgrims and travellers have regarded this really interesting and important part of Palestine merely as a road from Galilee to Judea, or from Judea to Galilee, in which the same well-trodden path has almost invariably been followed. Samaria being thus very imperfectly known, the notice we have to take of its valleys will be found greatly disproportionate to the relative extent of its figure in the maps of Palestine.

Samaria seems, upon the whole, a much more *open* and less mountainous country than either Galilee or Judea. It has mountains indeed, but they are in general less high and abrupt, and of more rounded forms, than those of the north or south. There is

little of stern or sterile aspect in Samaria. The sides of the shapely hills are for the most part beautifully wooded, while the valleys commonly open out into fertile plains or basins, surrounded by hills. These plains and valleys are watered by numerous streams, which contribute greatly to their fertility. Of the trees with which this fine province is stocked, the olive-trees greatly exceed all others in number. Wild animals * and feathered game (especially the red partridge) are more abundant than in Judea, or even in Galilee. But with all these advantages, towns and villages occur less frequently than in the other two provinces, nor are the inhabitants near as numerous. It being a more open country, and therefore more exposed to injuries and oppression, may possibly account for this.

The valley of Jennin—one of the numerous vales which lead out of the plain of Esdraelon—is that through which the usual route from Galilee to the city of Samaria lies. This valley is about thirteen miles long, and its width is about two miles in the northern part,—that is, as far as the interruption offered about midway by the hill on which stands the ruined castle of Sanhoor, after which it becomes more narrow. This valley, which some take to be the Scriptural valley of Jezreel, is watered by a brook, and is very fertile, well planted with olive-trees, considerably cultivated, and offering green pasture in those parts to which cultivation does not extend. This valley was doubtless in former times, as now, the high road by which the inhabitants of Galilee, who "must needs go through Samaria," journeyed when they went to celebrate the periodical festivals at Jerusalem.

The city of Samaria † stood but a few miles from the termination of this valley. It offers a curious and imposing appearance, standing, as it does, in terraces upon a high semispherical mount, standing alone in the midst of one of those enclosed basins or hollows for which Samaria is particularly noted. The enclosed valley which surrounds the central hill is very beautiful, watered by running streams, and covered by a rich carpet of grass, sprinkled with wild flowers of every hue; while beyond, stretched like an open book before one who stands upon the hill, lies the boundary of pleasant mountains, on which the olive and the vine are seen rising in terraces to the very summits.

From this place Lord Lindsay took a route across the country to Carmel, ‡ which enabled him to see a portion of Samaria not often visited by travellers. He describes the country as full of villages, well cultivated, and quite beautiful. After clearing the hills he proceeded along a beautiful and very extensive plain—a prolongation, doubtless, of the vale of Sharon—where the scenery suggested a comparison with Kent. "Nothing could exceed the richness of the soil or the beauty of its produce, even of the thistles, with which every fallow and uncultivated field was overgrown, and which were of the deepest hue and most luxuriant growth. Presently, leaving the plain, we rode for two hours through a range of sloping hills covered with beautiful valonidis, or evergreen oaks,—regular English park scenery; then the trees ceasing, through a continued expanse of sloping downs, till we reached the southern prolongation of Carmel."

Sandys, in travelling by land from Ramla to Acre (a rare journey), passed through the districts thus described; but the first part of his journey lay through the western part of a more southern portion of Samaria than Lord Lindsay saw. He speaks mostly of woods. He passed behind, inland, that wood of Sharon, the outer part of which, facing the coast, we have already noticed. Of this he says,—"After a while we entered a goodly forrest full of tall and delightfull trees, intermixed with fruitfull and flowry lawnes. Perhaps the earth affordeth not the like, it cannot a more pleasant."

The town of Nabulus—the Shechem of the Old Testament and the Sychar of the New Testament—is about four miles § south from the ruined city of Samaria. The long narrow valley in which it stands has already been described as extending its length from east to west between the mountains of blessing and cursing—the fertile Gerizim and the barren Ebal. So abundantly is this valley watered, that popularly it is said to be enriched by 365 springs. "There is nothing in the Holy Land," says Dr. Clarke, "finer than the view of Nabulus from the heights around it. As the traveller descends towards it from the hills, it appears luxuriantly embosomed in the most delightful and fragrant bowers, half concealed by rich gardens and by stately trees collected into groves all around the bold and beautiful valley in which it stands."

This valley leads into a fine plain, waving with corn in the time of summer, and which is concluded to have formed or to have contained "the parcel of ground which Jacob gave to his son Joseph," being the same which he purchased from the Shechemites.* The road southward towards Jerusalem lies across this plain, from which we pass into the beautiful valley of Leban,† which, although narrow, is not under eight miles in length. On crossing a brook, and ascending the hills at the end of this valley, we leave Samaria and enter the kingdom of Judea.

Travellers are apt to form the notion that a part of Palestine so supremely honoured as Judea was, must needs surpass in fertility and beauty; and that the ancient descriptions of the glory and richness of the country at large must apply with concentrated effect to Judea in particular. This arises from an association of ideas which there is nothing in Scripture to call for or to warrant. We are aware of no passage in which Judea is so described even by implication. Cultivation—such cultivation as Judea anciently received, when the terraced sides of its hills were clad with olives and with vines, and when its valleys were waving with corn—might, and did, make it not inferior to any other part of the country, and perhaps superior in variety of produce; but in a state of nature—into which state it has nearly fallen back—it is, for the most part, the least pleasant and fertile part of Palestine, with the exception of some peculiarly favoured districts. All travellers confess this, some of them reluctantly and with heavy hearts. We have already intimated something of this in our accounts of the mountains of Palestine; but as we intend to let these chapters stand for a description of the country, there is no more suitable place than the present for enlarging somewhat further on this difference.

Of the three elements of fertility in this climate, water, warmth, and soil, Judea can only be said to have warmth. The climate is warmer than that of Samaria or Galilee, while the surface offers but little vegetable mould, and water is scarce; and hence, except for a short time after the latter rains, the land presents an aspect of drought and desolation, singularly at variance with the accounts which several ancient writers give of its former fertility and pleasantness, and most disappointing to those whose expectations have been based on those accounts,—forgetting that the country now wants that teeming population to which its ancient richness was owing—that it is now still in enjoyment of its long sabbath, and is waiting the dawning of another day to resume the robes of glory and beauty it once wore.

In such a matter as this, the direct testimony of believing travellers is of much importance; and we therefore introduce the testimonies which follow. Maundrell, journeying to Jerusalem, after having left Samaria, by the route we have indicated, observes:—"All along this day's travel, from Kane [Khan] Leban to Beer, and also as far as we could see around, the country discovered a quite different face from what it had before—presenting nothing to the view, in most places, but naked rocks, mountains, and precipices."

Dr. Richardson advanced to Jerusalem by a very common route, from the N.W., by Jaffa and Ramla. The last-named town is on the inner border of the plain of Sharon. The hill country of Judea is distant two hours and a half from Ramla; but the characteristic desolation of Judea begins to be exhibited long before reaching these hills—that is, as soon as an ascent has been made from the frontier plain to another more elevated. "The aspect of the country," says the Doctor, "was now become bleak, the trees both few and small, the grass withered, from the little depth of soil, hard, and of bad quality. For some time before we reached the mountains, we kept looking up at their dusky sides, as they rose, in towering grandeur, to the height of 1000 or 1500 feet above our heads, covered with sunburnt grass; ‡ here and there disclosing strips of the bare horizontal rocks, and diversified with a few bushy trees, that stood at very unfriendly and forlorn distances from each other." Again:—"The hills, from the commencement of the mountain scenery [in this quarter], are all of a round, handsome shape, meeting in the base and separated at the tops, not in peaks, or pointed acuminations, but like the gradual retiring of two round balls placed in juxtaposition. Their sides are partially covered with earth, which nourishes a feeble sprinkling of withered grass, with here and there a dwarf shrub or solitary tree. They are not susceptible of cultivation, except on the very summit, where we saw the plough going in several places. They might be

* Perhaps it was so anciently also. See 2 Kings xvii. 25, 26.

† The ruined site now bears the name of *Subusta*, a modification of Sebaste [the Greek for Augustus], the name imposed on the city by Herod, after it had been greatly improved by him.

‡ The route is the same as that of Shaw, of which Lord Lindsay does not seem to have been aware.

§ "An hour and a half."—Elliot.

* John iv. 5; Gen. xxxiii. 19. † "Lebonah," Judges xxi. 19.

‡ These observations were made in the middle of April.

terraced; but there are no traces of their ever having been so. The rock crops out in many places, but never in precipitous cliffs; the strata in many places have exactly the appearance of stone courses in a building."

The view over the north-eastern part of Judea, as commanded from the high ridge on which stands Anathoth (now Anata), the birthplace of Jeremiah, is thus described by Professor Robinson: "From this point there is a view over the whole eastern slope of the mountainous region, including also the valley of the Jordan, and the northern part of the Dead Sea. The whole tract is made up of deep rugged valleys, running eastward, with broad ridges of uneven table-land between, often rising in high points. The sides of the valleys are so steep, that in descending into them we were often obliged to dismount from our horses. The whole district is a mass of limestone rock, which everywhere juts out above the surface, and imparts to the whole land only the aspect of sterility and desolation. Yet, wherever soil is found among the rocks, it is strong and fertile; fields of grain appeared occasionally: and fig-trees and olive-trees were scattered everywhere among the hills. Lower down the slope, towards the Jordan valley, all is desert."

Lord Lindsay, who traversed the whole extent of Judea from south to north, makes the important general remark—"All Judea, except the hills of Hebron and the vales immediately about Jerusalem, is desolate and barren; *but the prospect brightens as soon as you quit it*, and Samaria and Galilee still smile like the Land of Promise." Mr. Stephens, who travelled the same route, says, in effect, nearly the same thing.

But there is a season—after the spring rains and before the hot sun has absorbed all the moisture left by them—when even the desert is clothed with verdure; and at that season even the valleys of Judea present a refreshingly green appearance. But this happy season is not naturally of long continuance, and the skilful or laborious hand of man is not now present to perpetuate the blessedness which that season brings.

After this general notice, we will now proceed to enumerate such of the particular valleys or plains as seem most to demand our attention.

The most northerly spot we shall notice is Ainbroot, which some suppose to be the Scriptural Bethoron. This spot shines like a gem amid the desolation of Judea. All travellers mention it with admiration. The village is prettily situated upon an eminence, and commands on all sides a view of fertile and well-cultivated valleys. Lord Lindsay declares that this spot exhibited some of the loveliest scenery he had ever beheld—"Olive and fig gardens, vineyards and corn-fields, overspreading the valleys, and terraced on the hills, alternating with waste ground overgrown with the beautiful prickly oak and lovely wild flowers."

THE VALLEY OF BETHEL, although stony, as of old, and surrounded by stony mountains, is pleasantly situated about eight miles to the north of Jerusalem.

The Gibeon * of the Scriptures is situated upon a sharp rocky ridge, rising in the midst of broad valleys or plains, which form an extensive basin, full of corn-fields, vineyards, and orchards of olive and fig-trees. The situation of this valley seems to correspond to that which some of the old travellers point out as the valley of Ajalon, over which Joshua commanded the moon to rest. But this valley has been indicated in so many and distant places, that it is difficult to receive this identification, especially if Jib be identified with Gibeon. Morison says of this valley that it was the broadest of all he had seen in Judea, where, in general, the valleys are narrow and pressed close by their enclosing mountains.

THE VALLEY OF ELAH, also called the Terebinth Vale, is the alleged scene of David's victory over Goliath, and where they still show the brook from which the youthful champion picked the "smooth stones" with which he smote the Philistine. The whole, however—the vale *with* the enclosing hills—bears the name of the Wilderness of St. John [the Baptist], from its being supposed—we should think erroneously—to have been the scene of the birth and early history of the Great Forerunner. Notwithstanding the formidable name of "desert" or "wilderness," this is altogether one of the pleasantest places in Judea. It is an agreeable solitude, enjoying a pure air and productive soil; and where, although the people are few, there is much cultivation, from which excellent corn and exquisite wine are obtained.

The valley of Elah is now called Wady es-Sumt (Sunt), from the acacias which are scattered over it, and which have superseded the ancient terebinths. Of the latter, however, one old specimen, the largest perhaps in Palestine, still remains, as if to prove the accuracy of the ancient denomination. The famous brook is dry in summer; but in the season of rain it becomes a mighty torrent which inundates the vale.

* Gabao of Josephus, now Jib.

The valleys which surround the height on which Jerusalem stands claim our especial notice on account of the historical and sacred interest connected with them, rather than from their geographical importance in a general survey of the valleys of the land.

The renowned city is very singularly situated. Samaria offers some similarity of situation; and this similarity probably suggested the establishment there of that city, which was at one time the rival metropolis of the land. Samaria, as we have seen, stood on an eminence in the midst of a hollow enclosed by hills, and is therefore surrounded by the valleys which intervene between the bases of the enclosed and enclosing hills. Jerusalem, in like manner, is seated upon an eminence, or rather a collection of eminences, within a basin of enclosing hills and valleys. But this enclosure is only on three sides; for on the north the site opens to the high plains. Comparison between the sites of Jerusalem and Samaria ends with this *principle*, for there is no other resemblance. The shape and extent of the enclosed basin are different altogether. At Samaria the surrounding valleys are far more broad and cheerful, and the enclosing hills are more regular and beautiful than those at Jerusalem.

The figure of the site of Jerusalem being irregularly oblong, the valleys on the east and west—and especially the former—are much longer than the one on the south. To these valleys our present attention will be confined.

The most extensive and important of these valleys is that which lies east of the city—between it and the mount of Olives. This is the VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT. It is rather more than a mile in length, but narrow, as there are few places in which its breadth exceeds two hundred yards. This is that memorable valley so often mentioned under different names (¹) by the sacred historians and prophets; and which is sanctified in the memories of men afar off by the knowledge that its soil is replete with the dust of thousands of holy and venerable personages: and has been moistened by the tears of the prophets and the blood of the saints. Who knows not, also, that this valley was often traversed by David, or by "the Son of Man," whenever the record of their griefs bears witness that they crossed the brook of Kedron, or ascended Mount Olivet; or that it is the peculiar and awful distinction of this valley, that Jews, Mohammedans, and the mass of Christians, live and die in the persuasion that this is "The Valley of Decision,"—the valley to which all the nations shall be gathered in the great and terrible day of final judgment.

Properly speaking, this hollow is rather a ravine than a valley—"a deep and rugged ravine,"—as it is called by Lamartine, whose highly-wrought and figurative language is *here* applied with so much more than the usual appropriateness as to warrant the use of his description. "It was a deep and narrow valley, enclosed on the north by dark and barren heights which contained the sepulchres of kings, shaded on the west by the heavy and gigantic walls of a city of iniquities; covered at the east by the summit of the Mount of Olives, and crossed by a torrent, which rolled its bitter and yellow waters over the broken rocks of the valley of Jehoshaphat. At some paces distant * a black and bare rock detaches itself like a promontory from the base of the mountain, and, suspended over Kedron and the valley, bears several old tombs of kings and patriarchs, formed in gigantic and singular architecture, and strides, like the bridge of death, over the Valley of Lamentations. At that period [the time of Christ's 'agony'], no doubt, the sloping sides of Mount Olivet, now nearly bare, were watered by brooks from the pools, and by the still running stream of Kedron. Gardens of pomegranate, orange, and olive trees, covered with a thicker shade the narrow valley of Gethsemane, which delves like a sanctuary of grief into the darkest depths of the valley of Jehoshaphat."

The olive-plantations and vineyards are thin and few, and confined mostly to the northern part, upon and under the Mount of Olives. The valley deepens and widens in its progress southward—save that it somewhat narrows at about the middle part, where occur those old sepulchral monuments of which Lamartine speaks. Nor are these the sole memorials of the dead. The sides of the valley, particularly towards this middle portion, are almost paved with black and white sepulchral stones—thousands and tens of thousands,—for this is the place where, three thousand years ago, the Jew buried his dead under the shadow of his Temple; and ever since—because this is holy ground, and because it is held that men

* He is describing from the site of the Garden of Gethsemane, near the north end of the valley, at the foot of the Mount of Olives.

shall, in this vale, rise at the last day to honour or shame—the Jew journeys in his old age from the uttermost parts of the earth, that when he dies his bones may be laid in this valley of his fathers' sepulchres.

The famous brook Kedron, which traverses the length of this valley, is a mere winter torrent, quite dry for the greater part of the year.

The valley to the south, under Mount Zion, and between it and the so-called Hill of Evil Counsel,* is most probably that to which the Scripture gives the name of Ben-Hinnom, or, in the Greek, Ge-Hennom—"The valley of the son of Hinnom." Who this Hinnom was is not known. This valley is rather more than half a mile long. "Its breadth is about fifty yards, and its depth perhaps twenty, measuring from the bottom to the highest part of Mount Zion."† It is traversed by the channel of a winter torrent, which begins in the western valley and ends in the bed of the Kedron. The valley is wider at the eastern end, which joins the valley of Jehoshaphat, than at the western, which joins the valley of Gihon. This ravine formed part of the boundary between the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. Both its sides are cut down perpendicularly, as if it had served for a quarry to the ancient city,—and this circumstance increases its resemblance to a trench or ditch; and practically it did serve as a fosse on that side to "the city of David" on Mount Zion. The bottom is rock, covered with a thin sprinkling of earth washed down from the higher ground. Being comparatively well watered, it was anciently rich in gardens and groves, amid which the apostate Israelites, in the days of the monarchy, celebrated the horrid rites of Moloch, not unfrequently attended with the offering of human victims in sacrifice to his grim idol. Hence its frequent mention by the prophets in their denunciations of the "dark idolatries of alienated Judah;" and in thes it sometimes bears the name of Tophet, from the tabrets (called in Hebrew *toph*) with which the cries of the victims were drowned. After the Captivity had extinguished the propensity of the Jews to idolatry, the memories connected with this spot caused it to be regarded with abhorrence; and, following the example of king Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 10), it was appropriated to the vilest uses. Every kind of filth was thrown into it, as well as the carcasses of animals and the dead bodies of malefactors. But, to obviate the evil consequences which might be expected to ensue if such a mass of corruptible matter were left to putrefy, fires were constantly kept up in the valley to reduce the whole to ashes. Hence the metaphor which, in the New Testament and in the Jewish writings, transfers the name of Gehenna to that other place "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." On the farther side of this valley, towards the south-east, is the spot supposed, with very good reason, to be "Aceldama," the field of blood, which was bought with the price of the treason of Judas for "a field to bury strangers in" (Matt. xxvii. 3—8). The rocky and precipitous hill-side is here and elsewhere pierced with tombs of various forms and dimensions. The soil of Aceldama has had the reputation of reducing to dust within twenty-four hours the bodies deposited in it; and it was, if it be not still, believed, that it did not lose its decomposing properties even when carried to a distance.‡

These deep valleys on the east and south must always have restricted the extent of Jerusalem, in those quarters, within its present limits. But this is not the case on the west; for the western valley, which is called the valley of Gihon, is so shallow, that, according to Mr. Elliot, there is no palpable absurdity in supposing that it may have been included, with a portion of the opposite hill, in the ancient Jerusalem. On arriving on the verge of this valley, opposite Jerusalem, Lamartine says, "A vacant space of some hundred paces alone lay between us and the gate of Bethlehem. This area, barren, sloping, and waste, resembling the glacis which at a certain distance surrounds the fortified towns of Europe, opened to the right, and descended with a gentle declivity into a narrow valley." The valley is, however, considerably wider in its southern part than at this place.

* Because the house of Caiaphas, where the chief priests and the scribes took counsel against Christ, is supposed to have stood upon the top of the hill. Very unlikely.

† Robinson, who is probably right, although his estimate of the breadth is much under that of Eugene Roger, who says,—"Laquelle peut avoir mil cinq cents pas de longueur d'orient à l'occident, et trois à quatre cents de largeur."

‡ "By order of the Empress Helena, 270 ship-loads of this soil were transported to Rome, and deposited in the Campo Santo near the Vatican, where it was wont to reject the bodies of the Romans, and only consume those of strangers! The interior of the Campo Santo at Pisa is also filled with this soil, where I saw it two years ago, producing a rank crop of *alopecurus* and other grasses."—Monro, ii. 204.

Having completed this brief survey of the valleys which surround the humbled "city of the Great King," we may now proceed to explore the other valleys and the plains of Judea.

The road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem lies through a continued valley upwards of six miles in length, and of very considerable breadth.* The entrance to it is south-west of Jerusalem from the valley of Gihon. All the old travellers identify it with the Valley of Rephaim, so often mentioned in the Scriptures, and which is there celebrated for its fertility and for the victory of David over the Philistines.† We have no doubt this identification is correct, seeing that the Philistines then held possession of Bethlehem. Hence we are surprised to see that recent travellers suppose the Valley of Rephaim to be the same as that of Gihon on the west of Jerusalem. This mistake may have originated from some travellers misunderstanding the indications given to them; supposing, probably, that their guides indicated that as the Valley of Rephaim, when they really intended to point out the commencement of that valley which now engages our attention.

This valley is not deep. It might perhaps be more distinctive to describe it as a depressed plain, bounded on either hand by low hills. Its present appearance of fertility supports its ancient fame; and in it are corn-fields, vineyards, olive-grounds, and orchards of various kinds of fruits. The interest of this valley arises from the certainty that it was often traversed and its natural features noted by some of the most venerable personages of the sacred history in their journeys from Jerusalem to Bethlehem or to Hebron. The road is replete with pilgrim curiosities of the usual description, in few of which the instructed mind will be much interested. First, about two miles from Jerusalem is observed, to the right, a small eminence on which are the ruins of some large building, which we are told was the house of the aged Simeon, who, in the Temple, took the infant Jesus in his arms. About midway between Jerusalem and Bethlehem was the largest and most lofty terebinth-tree which Rauwolff had ever seen. It was too conspicuous and noble an object not to be sanctified by some tradition; and, accordingly, we are told that beneath the shade which this tree offered, the Virgin Mary was wont to rest on her journeys between Bethlehem and Jerusalem; and some marvellous instances are given of the respect and attention which the docile tree evinced. It was burnt down by the Arabs a few years after Rauwolff saw it, and an olive-tree afterwards supplied its place.‡ Six or seven hundred paces from this is a fine cistern, made apparently for watering the flocks pastured in the neighbouring campaigns. It is called the Cistern of the Kings, because, as the story runs, the Magi, while watering their camels here, saw anew the star which guided them to the obscure birthplace of Christ in Bethlehem. Near this is the monastery of St. Elias, where there is a rock on which we are told the prophet lay down to sleep when he fled from Jezebel, and on which he left the impress of his figure! Another building in ruins, about 500 paces beyond, is announced as the house of the prophet Habakkuk, or more likely, as Morison suggests, of a church built upon its alleged site. Not far from this is a cultivable ground, commonly called the Pea-field: it was formerly usual to find there a quantity of small rounded stones, in the form of chick-peas, concerning which we are told by a tradition, which Morison allows we are at liberty to admit or to reject, that a whole crop of this legume was turned to stone, because the churlish proprietor refused a handful to the Virgin Mary, and jeeringly told her they were not peas, but stones.(*) In the same neighbourhood, a ruined tower, with some other buildings, upon a height, is pointed out as the tower of Edar or of Jacob; and here also occurs Rachel's Sepulchre, which has been noticed in the historical portion of this work (p. 27). About 1200 paces from this is seen on the right hand a large and deep fosse of a round shape, which, as traditions tell, was dug to receive the bodies of Sennacherib's host, which was encamped in this valley when slain—all in one night—by the angel of the Lord. Rauwolff mentions another ditch, higher up the valley, employed for the same purpose, but the situation of which he does not clearly indicate. That great pits were dug on

* The only estimate of its breadth we have met with is that of Morison, who calls it a league wide. But we see cause to think this much too high an estimate. Accuracy of measurements is not among the many great merits of Morison as a traveller.

† 2 Sam. xxiii. 13; 1 Chron. xi. 15; xiv. 8-17; Isa. xvii. 5. Josephus' 'Antiq.' vii. 4.

‡ Morison says that, when the old terebinth-tree was destroyed, many attempts were made to plant another of the same species, but without success, as none of the young terebinths could, with any care, be made to take root. But the olive-tree grew spontaneously on the spot.

the occasion indicated is more than likely; but they were dug to be filled again, and would not now be recognizable as ditches. Even sensible travellers have forgotten this.*

We have enumerated the objects in the short route of two hours from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, partly that the reader may have before him some specimens of the ample fare which was provided for the curiosity and enthusiasm of pilgrims to the Holy Land.

At a short distance to the south of Bethlehem is a fine and rather extensive plain covered with rich pasture, where David, no doubt, often fed the flocks of his father. One part of this plain, enclosed by low hills planted with olive-trees and partly cultivated, is called the Shepherds' Field, from a tradition that it was in this place the shepherds of Bethlehem were watching their flocks by night, when the angel proclaimed to them the "glad tidings" that in "the city of David" "a Saviour" had then been born; and where a multitude of "the heavenly host" exulted in the manifestation of *glory* to God, *peace* to the earth, and *good-will* to man.

About one hour's journey to the south of Bethlehem is a small valley which offers the traditional and very probable site of one of Solomon's pleasure-grounds, where he made him "gardens, and orchards, and pools of water." The reservoirs at the south end of this valley, called the Pools of Solomon, still engage the attention of travellers, and will be duly noticed in a more suitable place. Below these runs another valley, narrow and rocky, about two miles in length, terminating in a close ravine. The mountains which enclose it are high, and run straight as palisades. The cultivable soil in the bottom of the valley varies in width, but rarely exceeds a hundred yards, and the rocks rise abruptly on either side. At something more than a quarter of a mile occurs the lower portion of a quadrangular building of coarse stone-work, thirty feet by twenty-one, the walls of which are six feet thick, and a small pipe, three inches in diameter, passes out on the side next the pools; but no other passage out can be discovered. A short distance beyond it the valley is set with fig-trees, vines, and olives, the proprietors of which inhabit a few huts on the left, where are also some ruined arches of stone. From the foot of the rock beneath these ruins issues a transparent spring, which, passing onward in a copious stream, winds through the valley, irrigating and fertilizing in its course, while the rock over its source is cut into various forms.

This valley is supposed to have been the site of the gardens, and the enclosed fountain and spring to be those alluded to by Solomon in the text, "A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse: a spring shut up, a fountain sealed" (Solomon's Song, iv. 12). Hence the valley bears the name of *Hortus Conclusus*. Maundrell thinks the pools before referred to were very likely made by Solomon; "but for the gardens," he says, "one may safely affirm that, if Solomon made them in the rocky ground which is now assigned for them, he demonstrated greater power and wealth in finishing his design than he did wisdom in choosing the place for it." But Hasselquist, a better judge, says, "The place will well admit that Solomon might have formed a garden here, though it is not by nature an agreeable situation, being in a bottom; but perhaps this great prince might choose to improve nature by art, as many other potentates have done." The fact is, that a valley kept always verdant by the singular abundance of water, afforded peculiar advantages in this country for a pleasure-ground. Mariti says, "Nature has still preserved its original fertility to the valley of *Hortus Conclusus*. Although but little cultivated, the soil still produces a tolerable quantity of cotton and various kinds of grain. There are also seen fine plantations of fruit-trees, affording the most juicy fruits of the country. Various flowers and many fragrant plants grow there naturally at all seasons—among which are thyme, rosemary, marjoram, sage, absinthium, persil, rue, ranunculuses, and anemones." De Breves, long before, bore similar testimony, though he was there in the very unfavourable month of July: he describes the valley as "always green:" and, besides the plants just named, cultivated by Nature's now kindly hand, he adds oranges, citrons, and pomegranates to the fruits which grow there. Zuallart says that several species of rare plants were found in the valley, and seems to insinuate the probability that they had been propagated from exotic plants which Solomon introduced into his gardens.†

Having come so far in this line of road, we will follow it so far as Hebron, in order to reach the VALLEY OF MAMRE, near that town. From the Pools of Solomon to Hebron, the road lies over a succession of barren hills, between which we do not find any noticeable valleys. The vicinity of Hebron renders the identification of the Vale of Mamre unquestionable. It has been slightly noticed in the Bible History (p. 14), to whom it formed a favourite place of encampment, and which contained the sepulchre in which their bones lay. This broad and winding valley extends for some miles, and is bounded on all sides, and apparently shut in by stony mountains. The soil is good; and offers much cultivation of the olive and the vine, while the uncultivated parts exhibit rich pastures. It contains a terebinth-tree, which is held in high honour by all the inhabitants of Hebron, especially by the Jews, in the belief that the tent of Abraham was shaded by its boughs.*

The notice which has been taken of the valleys on the line of road between Jerusalem and Hebron will incidentally have the use of supplying points which will serve to indicate the bearings of such other valleys, to the east or west of this line, as may now require our attention.

We may now return to the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and again walk southward from thence to explore the valleys which lie to the east or west of the central line to Hebron, which has now been described. The very important portion of Judah which lies between this central line and the coast has been very partially explored hitherto. Some travellers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did indeed traverse it by tracks which have not been followed by later travellers, except in the instance of Professor Robinson and the Rev. Eli Smith, the results of whose researches have only as yet been communicated to the public in a very slight sketch.

The only valley in this quarter to which the older travellers call attention, happens also to be the only one of which the Scripture takes notice. This is the VALE OF SOREK, so celebrated for its large clusters of fine grapes, and for excellent wine which those grapes afforded. It is the channel of a winter torrent, which commences behind the southern hills of that Wilderness of St. John which we lately noticed. From this, which is about five miles south west of Jerusalem, the valley stretches about four miles in a direction south by west, after which it extends away westward to the coast, before reaching which it turns sharply to the N.W.N., and opens to the sea about midway between Joppa and Ashdod. The whole of this course is nearly forty miles. This may explain the discrepancy between different travellers: for while some apply the name of the Vale of Sorek to this whole extent, others confine it to the shorter commencing portion, before the westward turn is taken. It is only of this part that we have any satisfactory description.

One principal reason of the interest which the old travellers took in this valley was from the belief that it was not only the valley of Sorek, so celebrated for its wine-grapes, but also that of Eshcol, from which the spies took the enormous vine-cluster which they bore to Moses (Num. xiii. 23, 24). Or rather, they think the valley was named Sorek, and the brook which flowed through it Eshcol. As the valley from which the spies took the cluster of grapes derived its name from that circumstance, it might certainly have two names—its old one, and that which it thus acquired. Others have rather chosen to find the valley of Eshcol in that which contains the spring called the Fountain of St. Philip—at which the deacon of that name is supposed, but we imagine very erroneously, to have baptized the Ethiopian eunuch. *This* valley opens into that of Sorek just at the point where the latter begins to bend decidedly westward. We have ourselves no very clear opinion about the situation of the Scriptural brook of Eshcol. Since one of Abraham's Amoritish friends, dwelling in the vale of Mamre near Hebron, bore this name of Eshcol, it has generally of late years been concluded that the valley so called took its name from him, and is in fact only another name for the valley of Mamre. The testimony of Jerome, which is of great weight in such a question, is favourable to this opinion, as is also the southward situation of that valley.† But, on the other hand, the sacred text expressly says, not that the brook Eshcol was so called from any connection with the Amoritish chief, but that "the place was called the brook Eshcol because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence." But we may leave this question, and return to the valley of Sorek,‡ which might certainly claim to be

* Quaresm. Elucid. T. S. ii. 589-614; Rauwolff, 373; Fürer, 64; De Breves 170; Zuallart, iii. 15; Cotovic, cap. 10; Nau, iv. 10; Morison, ii. 26; Maundrell, 88.

† Moore, ii. 255; De Breves, 190; Zuallart, iv. 3; Nau, 444; Maundrell, 89; Mariti, ii. 385; Hasselquist, 145.

* Elliot, ii. 499; Stephens, ii. 140; Lindsay, ii. 50. About the terebinth-tree of Mamre, see p. 14.

† Epitaph. Paulæ, fol. 59, G. H.

‡ All the Scriptural encomiums on the vine and the wine of Sorek are lost to the English reader, through our translators having understood the word as an appellative rather than a proper name, and accordingly translated "choice vine," "noble vine," as in Gen. xlix. 11; Isa. v. 2; Jer. ii. 21, &c.

regarded as that through which the brook of Eshcol flowed, if the great superiority of its wines might be taken as evidence in its favour.

Understood in the more limited sense which we have defined, the valley of Sorek is rather deep and moderately broad. The mountains which enclose it on the west, present only the appearance of scarped rocks. Those on the opposite side are lower, but covered with verdure. The valley is, or was down to recent times, cultivated unusually well—partly as arable land, and partly in vineyards, besides plantations of the fig-tree and the olive. The vines of this valley are still the finest, and the wine made from them the best in the Holy Land. The supposition that this was the vale in which the spies "cut down a branch with one cluster of grapes, and bare it between them upon a staff," gives interest to the statement of Eugene Roger, that in the year 1633 he found here a cluster of white grapes, weighing twenty four French pounds;* and he adds that it was quite ordinary to find them from six or eight to ten or twelve (French pounds) weight. The wine made from these grapes was that which was supplied to visitors at the convent of St. John, and is declared by Morison and others to be one of the best in the Holy Land. It is a white wine; and, says the traveller just named, "it was so delicate and so delicious, that, in tasting it, my conscience secretly reproached me for so badly imitating the great Baptist, who in this very place [the wilderness of St. John] abstained from all wine and strong drink."† This valley is now called Wady es-*Surar*, which has sufficient resemblance to *Sorek* to support the alleged identity; and at one place, upon the hills which it intersects, is a place called *Surah*, which Dr. Robinson identified with Zorah, but which we feel more disposed to find the ancient Sorek.

We shall now look to the valleys which lie between the Dead Sea and the centre of Judea.

The Desert of St. Saba might be mentioned either among mountains or valleys. We place it here, among the latter, because the mountains which give it character form the sides of the valley or ravine at the bottom of which the torrent of Kedron makes its way towards the Dead Sea. As Dr. Pococke's account of it involves an account of the valley of Kedron from Jerusalem to this place, we give it the preference. The older and later travellers usually visit it from Bethlehem. The route by the valley of Kedron offers, as might be expected, a more direct route to the Dead Sea than that by the plain of Jericho.

"We went to the south-east, along the deep and narrow valley in which the brook Kedron runs: it has high rocky hills on each side, which are shaped into terraces, and doubtless produced formerly both corn and wine: some of them are cultivated even at this time.... About six miles from Jerusalem we ascended a hill to the south, from which we had a prospect of Zion, the Mount of Olives, and Bethlehem. We then went about an hour on the hills, and descending a little to the south, came to a lower ground, where we had the first view of St. Saba. Then turning east, in less than a mile we arrived at the convent, which is situated, in a very extraordinary manner, on the high rocks over the brook Kedron. There was a great number of grottoes about it, supposed to have been the retreats of hermits. The monastic and hermit's life was instituted here in the fourth century by St Saba. They say that there have been 10,000 recluses here at one time, and some writers affirm that, in St. Saba's time, there were 14,000. The monks of the convent never eat flesh; and they have such privileges that no Mohammedan can enter the convent, under penalty of paying 500 dollars to the mosque of the Temple of Solomon. St. John Damascenus, Euphemius, and the monk Cyril of Jerusalem lived in this retirement, which is computed to be equally distant from Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and the Dead Sea; that is, about three hours from each of them."

This learned traveller seems not to have been at the bottom of the valley, and consequently was not aware of the large and deep cavern at the foot of the mountain, in which rises a spring of water, *said* to have been miraculously produced by St. Saba for the benefit of the monastery which he founded. This place has not been much visited by the old Catholic pilgrims, because the monastery is in the hands of the Greek "schismatics;" nor by those of the recent date, because it does not lie on any of the more frequented roads.

The old travellers who visited St. Saba generally included what they called the DESERT OF ENGEDDI in their route. In an inquiry after Engeddi, the editor of the 'Pictorial Bible' (1 Sam. xxiv. 1) satisfies himself by reasoning that it must have lain more towards the southern extremity of the Dead Sea, and Professor Robinson has since discovered the very name of Ain Jiddi as nearly as may be in the situation thus conjecturally assigned. But although travellers are thus shown to be wrong in the appropriation of the name of Engeddi to the locality which they describe, the place itself is a reality which requires our notice.

Several of the travellers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have very satisfactory accounts of this place; but that which Mr. Monro has given is better than any of them, and will be more acceptable to the reader:—

"At one hour (east from Bethlehem) we reached the foot of the mountain, upon the eastern side of which the 'Cave of Engeddi' is situated. The ascent is not difficult, although marked by no paths; and the mountains are of the loftiest in the neighbourhood, presenting a strong and well-chosen 'hold.' Upon the summit are the foundations of a thick wall composed of large stones, enclosing a quadrangular space in which is a reservoir for water, and on the western side of it the ground is raised in a semicircular form. A cistern, no doubt, has existed here from the earliest times, at which the flocks were wont to be watered, and which gave the name to the place, since *Engeddi* in Hebrew signifies the *kid's fountain*. The cave a little below its summit had its entrance, four and a half feet high, and somewhat wider, carefully closed with stones by the Arabs previous to their retiring to the desert.

"Having pulled down the wall, I found the length of the interior to be about sixty feet, and the guide said that its depth was nearly the same; but the back part was so entirely filled up with chaff, that not more than twenty-five feet were left vacant. In the highest part it was eight feet, but in most places less than five. Although a natural cavern, it seems to have had its surface smoothed by cutting. This mountain stands upon the border of the desert, commanding a view of the Dead Sea to the south-east.

"That the spot is entitled to the name it bears appears probable from the coincidence of its physical circumstances with the Scriptural narration of the transaction with which it is connected. (1 Sam. xxiv.) 'Saul came to the sheep-cotes by the way, where was a cave.' This could not have been actually in the wilderness, where is no vegetation.* Besides which, he was on the way thither; he had not yet reached it. It is remarkable that the nature of the ground is precisely the same at the present day. While the neighbouring district on three sides is arable, this mountain, situated within a mile of the wilderness, is covered with grass; and near the top of it are caves with small stone enclosures in front, serving as pens or 'sheep-cotes' for the flocks. Near the cave itself a flock of sheep and goats were feeding."

Separately from any question about Engeddi, this is one interesting specimen of the numerous grottoes in Palestine. That which has been described is not the only one in the neighbourhood. It is the principal of them; but there are many others which, like this, serve as retreats to the Arabs and to the flocks which they feed

It is almost a matter of regret that a scene so much in unison with the Scriptural intimations should now appear to be not the place to which these intimations refer. As Mr. Monro's account is rather limited, it is proper to observe that what the old travellers understood as the desert of Engeddi is a district of some extent, rendered agreeable by the diversified aspect of its mountains and by the richness of its well-watered valleys. The Scriptural Engeddi was celebrated for its vineyards. (Sol Song, i. 14) The place now described has no such celebrity. The hills and valleys are entirely uncultivated; and only some wild olives and other trees are now seen.

In taking a view of the country to the south of Hebron down to the borders of the desert, we must avail ourselves exclusively of the most recent authorities. The information we have lately acquired concerning this very interesting portion of Palestine is one of the benefits which we have incidentally derived from the discovery of Petra by Burckhardt. Before that time, those travellers whose views embraced Egypt and Sinai as well as Palestine proceeded first to Cairo, then went to Sinai, and returned to Cairo, after which they either took the caravan route from Cairo to Gaza or else proceeded to the coast and embarked for Jaffa. But when Petra had attracted attention, and travellers in visiting that place from Akaba were already more than half way to Palestine, it began to be felt absurd to return to Egypt in order to proceed from thence to the Holy Land. Mr. Stephens, followed by Lord Lindsay, struck boldly across from Petra, through the desert and the south of Judea to Hebron; and the practicability of the route being thus established, travellers already in Palestine have not hesitated to proceed from Hebron to Petra. This has been done

* Twenty-six lbs. 7 oz. avoirdupois. † Luke i. 15.

* This is not true, whether taken as a general, or, with reference to the [illegible] as a particular observation.

by de Bertou, Professor Robinson, and others. The latter gentleman, with his companion Mr. Smith, also explored another tract of this interesting district in travelling straight from Akabah to Hebron, across the desert which intervenes between Sinai and Palestine, and through the southernmost portion of the latter country. He was not, however, as he supposes, the first modern traveller to cross this desert. Mr. Arundale had some years before (in 1833) crossed its *entire* length in the journey which he made direct from Sinai to Gaza, without turning aside to Akabah on the one hand or to Suez on the other. But, unhappily, this gentleman does not appear from his book to have been aware that he was pursuing a route which is not known to have been for ages travelled by European feet; and hence, his particular attention not being excited, his information conveys little instruction to us.

It may be useful to state the routes or parts of routes which are peculiar or common to the several travellers we have named, as enabling the reader to enter the better into those passages in which their authority is adduced.

The route of Mr. Stephens and of Lord Lindsay was the same all the way from Sinai to Hebron. The return journey of Count de Bertou from Akabah to Hebron by Petra, was also the same as theirs between the same points.

The route of Count de Bertou from Hebron to Akabah is two-thirds of it new. Its commencing portion, from Hebron to the end of the Dead Sea, coincides *partly* with the preceding route, and wholly with that of Irby and Mangles, and Dr. Robinson, who, in his first publication, regretted that M. de Bertou had anticipated him by three or four weeks, on this route, not knowing that both were anticipated 20 years ago by Irby and Mangles, and before them by Seetzen; while its terminating portion, on the approach to Akabah, is 25 miles, included in the usual route from Akabah to Petra.

Although Dr. Robinson was not the first to cross the desert of El Tyh, his route across it from Akabah to Hebron was new, with the exception of about 18 miles between the points where Mr Arundale's route from Sinai joined his, and afterwards left it to proceed to Gaza.

All Mr. Arundale's route from Sinai to Gaza was new, with the same exception which has just been stated, and in which his route coincided with that of Dr. Robinson.

Departing from Hebron, we will trace such particulars, on these several lines of route, as come within the scope of our present chapter. We shall, however, stop when we reach the skirts of the desert; which, as it happens, coincides, as nearly as possible, with the line which we gave to the southern border of Palestine. The desert beyond we reserve for the general notice with which this chapter will terminate.

Our first route traverses the heart of the southward country, from Hebron to Wady Ruheibeh, through which we take Professor Robinson for our guide. But, for the sake of uniformity, we reverse the direction which he took, which was *to* Hebron, not *from* it.

The valley of Mamre has already been noticed, as well as the claim which it offers to be regarded as the Scriptural Eshcol. This claim is supported by the generally fertile character of the district about and immediately to the south of Hebron. "We could not but notice," says our guide, "the fertility of the surrounding valleys, full of fields of grain, and of vineyards, yielding the finest and largest clusters of all Palestine. Yet, to a careless observer, the country in general can only appear sterile; for the limestone rocks everywhere come out upon the surface, and are strewn over it in large masses, to such a degree that a more stony or rocky region is rarely to be seen."

This sort of country, but with diminishing cultivation, continues about twenty miles, when the hill-country of Judea terminates, and we have before us a wide open plain, covered with grass, and where fields of wheat and barley are seen all around. It was probably for the sake of the pastures by this and other plains and valleys in this quarter, that so much preference was given to it by the Hebrew patriarchs. Indeed, this present plain extends southward to the borders of the Wady-es-Seba, on which, at the point where the road crosses, Dr. Robinson had the happiness to discover the site of the patriarchal Beersheba, as mentioned in a preceding page. Beyond this, the hills are higher than travellers coming from the south have seen since leaving the Sinai peninsula. Beyond these higher hills extends for many miles an "open rolling country:" all around are swelling hills, covered, in ordinary seasons, with grass and rich pasturage. After this, the character of the country becomes changed to that of an elevated plateau; and beyond it another plateau [of lower level, we presume] extends all the way to our limit, Wady Ruheibeh. This is called, by Professor Robinson, "a fine plain, covered with grass, and herbs, and bushes; in crossing which our ears were regaled with the carols of the lark and the song of the nightingale, all indicating our approach [coming from the south] to a more fertile region." The learned traveller also remarks, that the Arabic name Ruheibeh may suggest the Rehoboth of Scripture—the name of one of Isaac's wells; but, as he also observes, other circumstances do not correspond.

These facts are important and interesting, as showing the existence of a large tract of naturally fine country, partly cultivable, and everywhere abounding in rich pastures. This must have been a valuable part of the Hebrew territory; but the greater part of it was either not assigned to the Hebrews at all, or set down only as so much unprofitable desert, until the Editor of the Pictorial Bible was enabled by analogy to estimate its true value, and to assign to it a character similar to that which actual observation has since shown it to bear.

Now, returning to Hebron, we will travel from thence, south by east, to the borders of Wady Arabah. Count de Bertou must be our chief guide; for, although Mr. Stephens and Lord Lindsay have some important observations, there is, as usual, a want of that precision which gives value to the remarks of a man of science, and in the absence of which it is often difficult to allocate observations entitled, in themselves, to much consideration.

As the travellers whom we have named all advanced towards Hebron northward from Wady Arabah, it may be well to give the same direction to the statement collected from their observations.

As the point at which they left the Wady Arabah is too far southward, we will take a point on this route nearly on the same line with the Wady Ruheibeh of the more western route, and distant forty-four miles therefrom. Let this be Wady el-Kofeikifeh, which is about eighteen miles from the point at which we leave the Wady Arabah.

For some miles above and below this point, a range of low hills, bearing the same name, intervene between Wady Arabah and the road which we traverse.

Before reaching the point where the roads to Hebron and Gaza diverge, we pass, about three miles to the left, an isolated small hill, named by the guides Kâdeseh, or El Madurah, a remarkable name, which suggests to Count de Bertou whether it may not be the Kadesh of the Scriptures. This must be the same site which Lord Lindsay writes so differently as Hussaya Ulmedurra, and calls it a chalk hill; reporting also the Bedouin tradition, that under it God crushed a guilty village. A little way beyond this brings us to the foot of Jebel Yamen (Right Hand Mountain), a range of hills which forms the termination (or, in our direction, the beginning) of the mountains of Judea in this quarter. These we enter by a deep defile called Wady Fukreh,* the mural hills on either side rising from 150 to 200 feet. On reaching the end of this valley or gorge, a steep ascent is commenced, up mountains about 1,000 feet high, winding by a very rough track through a wild and rocky defile. On reaching the summit a slight descent brings us upon an elevated plain, called Atreibi,† the surface of which is composed of heavy sand, with the usual plants of the desert,—"but still," says Lord Lindsay, "a garden compared with the waste we had recently traversed." In fact, traces of something more than desert vegetation begin to appear as we advance into the plain; and beyond Wady Kurnib ‡ the country assumes the appearance of a down rather than a desert, being thickly covered with grass and shrubs.

Travellers march on for six hours from Wady Kurnib without finding much to engage their attention. Then they reach a place called El Melek,§ which is described as being situated in *a very extensive plain*, called El Foura. Here Lord Lindsay's party "were surprised at finding two large and deep wells, beautifully built of hewn stone: the uppermost course, and about a dozen troughs for watering cattle disposed round them, of a coarse white marble: they were evidently coeval with the Romans. Quite a patriarchal scene presented itself as we drew near to the wells. The Bedouins were watering their flocks,—two men at each well letting down the skins, and pulling them up again with almost ferocious haste, and with quick, savage shouts, and then emptying them into the troughs: the shepherdesses stood aloof, and veiled their faces, seeing the strange

* Lord Lindsay must have misunderstood his guides. He supposed they were telling him the name of the mountains, when they actually told him the valley; for this word is doubtless that which he represents by Jebel *Asufar*. These and other differences of orthography which we have occasionally to notice—and which are sometimes very amusing—may serve to indicate to the reader a circumstance by which geographical inquiry and comparison are often grievously perplexed.

† By Lord Lindsay. M. de Bertou, whose names are rather more trustworthy, gives it differently.

‡ Lord Lindsay has it Kournou.

§ So Lord Lindsay. The place El Milh, incidentally named by M. de Bertou, is, doubtless, the same.

howagis. The several flocks, coming up and retiring in the exactest order, were a beautiful sight."

The same neighbourhood gives M. de Bertou occasion to remark-- "In summer each camp seeks out fresh pasturage for its flocks and herds, which forcibly recalled to my mind that Esau and Jacob separated from each other for the same purpose. At every step in this country one finds a striking resemblance between the account given in the Bible of the patriarchs of old and the manners and customs of its present inhabitants—NOTHING HAS CHANGED."

A range of stony hills, called Jebel el Gheretain,* bound the plain of El Foura on the north; and, these being passed, numerous ruined garden walls and terraces warn us of our entry among the ancient cultivation of Judea. As we proceed we observe occasional patches of ground reclaimed from the desert, and under actual cultivation; and, ere long, the whole valley below us becomes green with corn, field descending below field, divided by regular terraces. This cultivation belongs to the village of Semuah.† This is but ten miles from Hebron; and all the way we ride through fields of corn, between rounded hills, which are covered to their very tops with bushes of the prickly oak.

One general observation results from the brief survey of the two last routes, which is, that cultivation and pasturage cease the soonest on the south-eastern route, being that to the extremity of the Dead Sea and to the Wady Arabah.‡

In stating the observations made by M. de Bertou in his *southward* route *from* Hebron *to* Akabah, we took up that route as it entered the Ghor at the southern extremity of the Dead Sea, omitting the details which he gives of his route from Hebron to that point. Part of that route coincides with that which has just engaged our attention. But, coming from Hebron, the route in question leaves this at about El Melek, and strikes off east-south-east to the end of the Dead Sea. The distance does not exceed twenty miles; but the country passed over is of very striking interest.

The journey lies, at first, over an undulating plain, with the grass dried up (in April) for want of water. Proceeding, a glimpse of the Dead Sea is first obtained at the outlet of a deep valley on the left. The ground soon begins to descend rapidly, and is covered with salt, and occasionally flints, presenting an aspect of the most complete desolation. When we have made half our way, the road takes a more easterly direction, following the dry bed of a torrent, which in winter discharges its stream into the back-water of the lake near its extremity. This torrent bed is called Wady Zoarah. As we advance in this valley, tamarisks and acacias become abundant, and a fine view of the Arabian mountains opens in the distance; and, ultimately at the foot of the descent, the waters of the Wady Zoarah spread out over a plain, which is called by the Arabs El Nafileh,§ from the quantity of shrubs of that name with which it is covered. In this plain the route continues for a short distance parallel to the lake, and within 500 yards of its shore, till we reach the Ghor, or plain to the south of the Dead Sea, at which point we took up the route on a former occasion, and therefore leave it now.

Seeing that we were disposed to look for the cave of Engeddi in this quarter, it is interesting to find here quite as remarkable a cave as that towards the other extremity of the lake, to which the name has long been assigned. M. de Bertou, passing along the plain, with the Dead Sea on his left, and the hills from which he had descended on his right, says,—"In the limestone hills on our right is a grotto named Magharat Esdúm (Sâdúm), whence gushes a salt stream. The Arabs say that the cave may be followed for some miles."

The tract which has thus briefly been characterised, together with the salt plain south of the Asphaltic Lake, forms the scene of which M. de Bertou speaks in these memorable words, which we can neither omit nor abridge:—

"In attempting to describe the scenes which we had yesterday beheld, I feel the utter inadequacy of words to express my feelings. I had wandered through the Alps, the Pyrenees, and many other mountains,—I had seen countries blasted by the curse of the Almighty, the plains of Moab, and the land of Ammon,—but had seen nothing to compare with the mountains of Zoarah and Esdum. Here is desolation on the grandest scale, and beyond what the imagination of man could conceive; it must be seen—to describe it is impossible. In this striking and solemn waste, where Nature is alike destitute of vegetation and of inhabitants, man appears but an atom;—all around is enveloped in the silence of death,—not a bird, not even an insect is seen! The regular step of our camels returned a dull sound, as if the earth were hollowed beneath our feet: the monotonous chant of the camel-driver accompanied at times the step of this inhabitant of the desert, but was suddenly stopped, as if he feared to awaken Nature. The sun concealed itself by thick clouds, and seemed unwilling to shine upon the land cursed by the Almighty. We saw the traces of several wolves. Everything seemed to combine to make the landscape awfully sublime."

We now proceed to notice such characteristics of the country *east* of the river Jordan, and its lakes, as the object of this chapter will allow it to embrace. But, seeing that particular spots in this important part of the country are less aggrandized by historical or sacred associations than those on the western side of the river, a much less detailed survey may be sufficient: and, perhaps, the view which we can afford to take may be best exhibited in the form of a statement of the prominent characteristics of the several districts of which this region is composed.

These are the districts of Argob and Bashan, of Gilead, of the land of Moab, of the land of the Ammonites, and of the Haouran.

ARGOB AND BASHAN are allied districts, which may be placed together, as they usually are in Scripture, in which they are celebrated for their oaks and their cattle. The "bulls of Bashan" was indeed a proverbial expression for cattle in their best and proudest condition. This, of course, implies the excellence of its pastures.

We shall understand that Argob and Bashan embraced the northernmost portion of the trans-Jordanic country, from the spurs of Mount Hermon to the river Jarmouk, a few miles south of the Lake of Gennesareth. It is, indeed, possible that the district may have extended somewhat to the south of this border; but, as the precise limits of this and the other provinces are uncertain, it seems best to assume the most marked geographical boundary which can be found at some point which *cannot* be far from the truth.

By Argob, as distinct from Bashan, though it was probably only a district of Bashan, we shall understand the strip of country which extends along the eastern border of the Lake of Gennesareth, and perhaps beyond it northward.

This country has been explored by Burckhardt, Major Skinner, Elliot, Baron Taylor, and others. Burckhardt traversed both the northern and southern route through this country, on the roads to Damascus. The first of these routes crosses the Jordan at Jacob's Bridge, and proceeds, by way of Kanneytra and Sasa, to the plain of Damascus. Major Skinner and Baron Taylor went from the Jordan to Damascus, and Burckhardt and Elliot from Damascus to the Jordan by this route. The other route leads from Feik, a town near the south-eastern extremity of the Lake of Gennesareth, and proceeds to the plain of Damascus by way of Nowa and Tel Shakab.

We have already found more than one occasion to intimate, that the whole country east of the Jordan is elevated far above the level of that river, insomuch that the high mountains which rise before one who approaches from the west, offer but slight descents into the eastern plains when their summits are reached.

The chain of Jebel Heish* comes down from the Great Hermon, through about twenty-five miles of the tract which is now under our notice. The higher road passes over this chain, near the middle part; while the lower road passes about seven miles south from its terminating eminence of Tel Faras.

These hills are of very moderate elevation when we draw near them, although their positive height above the valley of the Jordan on the one hand, and above the plains of Jolan and Damascus on the other, makes them most conspicuous in the distance. The road has a gradual ascent to them in both directions. These hills are bordered by a stony district, which is about three miles broad, and in some directions more. The oaks, for which the country was so highly celebrated, make their appearance a few miles after we leave the valley of the Jordan.† They are of the dwarf kind, and in this quarter their branches have, to a very great extent, been lopped off, and carried away for fuel. After passing the hills, the country becomes flatter and more plentifully wooded. The soil is

* Lindsay. Not named by De Bertou.

† De Bertou. Lord Lindsay says "*Simoa* or *Simoo*;" and thinks it may be Shema, enumerated among the towns in Judea in Josh. xv. 26.

‡ The above particulars are mostly drawn from M. de Bertou's paper in vol. ix. pt. ii. of the 'Geo. Journal,' and from Lord Lindsay's 'Letters.' It has been found impossible to make any use of Mr. Stephens's facts, on account of the entire want of *names*, and his neglect of stating *time* and *distance*.

§ This seems to be either *Medicago intertexta* or *Medicago Arabica*; we are not sure which.

* See before, p. 422.

† By which we mean, as always when speaking largely, the general channel of the Jordan and its lakes.

richer, cultivable, and to a considerable extent, cultivated. As we advance to the river Meghannye the trees increase, and the country becomes a forest; but beyond that river, we soon enter a stony plain, which continues to the fertile plain of Damascus. The river, or the border of this stony desert, probably formed the northern limit of Bashan, and, consequently, of the territory of Manasseh beyond Jordan.

The general pasturage of this tract is very good, and wherever there are streams the soil is covered with the most luxuriant herbage and grass of the brightest green. The sites of the villages are marked by clumps of poplars and olive-trees. But in this region villages are few and far between; and, says Major Skinner, "it is desolate to pass over so rich a country for many hours without seeing a habitation."

In the southern part of the country, which the mountains of Heish do not intersect, the plain is more even and open. It also appears to be less wooded—at least the presence of wood is less noticed, until near the southernmost borders of the river Jarmouk. For eighteen or twenty miles east of the hills which bound the Lake of Gennesareth, the plain is wholly uncultivated, but is overgrown with a wild herb called *khob*, on which camels and oxen feed with pleasure—even in this circumstance agreeing with the ancient character of the country. The tract thus characterised must have included Argob. The soil is black or grey; but, at the distance eastward which we have indicated, the soil changes to the red colour of the earth of the Haouran plains; and, as if this soil were more cultivable, as it probably is, cultivation commences with this change. The neighbourhood of Tzeil, where, on the route, this change first appears, offers also the first traces of cultivation. Beyond this, the greater part of the plain is, in the season, covered with fine crops of wheat and barley; but in about fifteen miles more the plain becomes badly cultivated, and, finally, we enter upon the first stony, and then rocky district, which bounds this district upon the north and east.*

Gilead.—The precise limits of the land of Gilead cannot be clearly defined on any data which the Scriptures offer. We know that it lay south of Bashan, and north of Moab; but, although from this we know well enough, in a general way, the situation of the district, we are not thereby assisted to the knowledge of its precise limits, as the boundaries of Bashan and of Moab are as uncertain as those of Gilead. The best course, therefore, seems to be, as before, to assume marked geographical limits, which shall certainly include the whole or greater part of the country, without undertaking to say that the true limits may not have extended beyond, or fallen within those which we adopt. In the present instance, this is the more obvious course, as the name Gilead seems to have been always rather loosely applied, and never described as a political division of the country. We shall, for these reasons, consider the name of Gilead as applicable to the fine hilly country embraced between the river Jarmouk on the north, and the river Jabbok on the south. We are quite aware that the current authorities—Adrichomius, Quaresmius, Calmet, and Wells—affirm that Bashan extended, southward, to the river Jabbok. There is no authority in Scripture for this assertion; but it so happens that this statement would have been nearly true if the Jabbok had really been placed as they lay it down: for, without confounding the Jabbok with the Jarmouk, but by misplacing both, they make the Jabbok either flow into the Lake of Gennesareth, or into the Jordan, a few miles below its southern extremity—in fact, nearly where the Jarmouk ought to have been placed. Consequently, their southern frontier of Bashan, and northern of Gilead, coincides in fact,—though in terms far from doing so,—with that which we have chosen. As the old writers knew absolutely nothing of the country beyond Jordan, their mistakes are excusable, and we should not have deemed it worth while to notice the matter, were it not that some, and those not the least intelligent, recent travellers,† adopt the modern conclusion that the Jabbok (being the Zerka) is forty or fifty miles south of the position formerly assigned it, and yet retain the old conclusion that Bashan extended to the Jabbok, whereby they make that district disproportionately large, at the expense of leaving no suitable room for Gilead, and, in fact, include under the name of Bashan the district to which the name of Gilead properly belongs.

The land of Gilead is more mountainous, and more diversified by hill and dale, than Bashan to the north, or than the land of Moab to the south. In the more southern part the mounts are of considerable height. In the northern part this district is the least interesting; in the central and eastern parts it is the most picturesque and the southern the most grand. But, although the northern part is a dull, uninteresting country, with little wood and less beauty, the soil is very rich, and amply repays the labour of the husbandman. On the southern border there is nearly an equal want of wood, and the soil seems less productive; but a compensation is offered to the traveller in the striking character of the scenery which the mountains offer.

Advancing from the north, or north-west, to the south, or to the east, trees begin to appear, and soon thicken into clumps, and woods, and forests. The roads are beautiful, winding over hills and through vales, or narrow rocky ravines, overhung with valonidi oak, which is the characteristic tree of this region, and which is the last to disappear in the least wooded parts. But there are many other fine trees, the names of which travellers do not specify. The beds of the streams and winter-torrents are everywhere full of the most superb oleanders.

The grandest part of the country is the most mountainous—about Jebel Adjeloun. Corn-fields appear in favourable situations. The valonidi, the prickly-oak, and the olive-tree invest the lower summits, or appear tufted among the crags. After a long ascent these disappear, except the prickly-oak; but the arbutus, the fir, and the ash succeed them; and a larger leafed species of valonidi supplies the place of that which we have lost. Even the noble crags which form the summits of these mountains are almost hidden among beautiful trees. The fir-trees of the utmost heights are very noble.

One of the finest and broadest valleys of Gilead is that near El Hosn, which Lord Lindsay thus describes:—

"A beautiful narrow glen ushered us into a broad valley, richly wooded to the summits of the hills with noble prickly-oaks, a few pine-trees towering over them. I never should have thought that the shrubs which I had seen covering the hills at Hebron could have attained such size and beauty: yet the leaf of the largest tree is not larger than the shrubs. I saw an occasional *degub* tree, or arbutus, but the prevailing trees were oaks, prickly and broad-leafed: it was forest scenery of the noblest character—next to that of Old England, with which none I ever saw can stand comparison."*

The Land of Moab.—In fixing the northern border of this land at the river Jabbok, we are influenced chiefly by the desire to avoid minute subdivisions in a cursory survey like that on which we are now engaged. In this we imitate the Scripture, which, when it speaks largely and generally, appears to give the same extent to the land of Moab. The fact is, that all this territory was once occupied by the Moabites; but the northern part—nearest the Jabbok—was taken from them by the Amorites, and erected into an independent kingdom. In the possession of this people the Israelites found it when they marched from the desert towards the Jordan; and when it fell to them, by their victory over Sihon the Amoritish king, they bestowed it upon the tribes of Reuben and Gad. But the children of Lot always remembered that this land had been originally theirs; and in the time of Jephthah made a formal demand for its restitution, and a battle was the consequence of a refusal. It is, therefore, admissible to call the whole of the country, from the Jabbok southward to the borders of Edom, the land of Moab, when we require a larger and more comprehensive name than the minute subdivisions of political geography will, in this quarter, supply.

Notwithstanding that we have fixed the northern limit of Moab at the Jabbok, we have already taken occasion† to express our willingness to include in the borders of Gilead the mountains which lie immediately to the south of that river. We have no difficulty in this; for, regarding Gilead as a loose general name for the more hilly part of the country beyond Jordan, and, as such, unrestricted by political divisions, there is no reason why the denomination should not be extended into the land of Moab.

The mountains south of the Jabbok have been already noticed in

* The above account of Argob and Bashan offers a digested comparison of the numerous particular observations in Burckhardt, Skinner, and Elliot.—Burckhardt, 281-284; 312-315; Skinner, i. 301-319; Elliot, ii. 317-327.

† Lord Lindsay, for instance. Of the writers on Biblical geography, the acute and judicious Reland is the only one who acted well in this matter. Distrusting the northerly position previously given to the river Jabbok, and yet knowing nothing clearly about it, he omits it in all his maps, while the principal rivers, which he does insert, the Jarmouk (Hieromax) and Arnon, are first placed by him correctly—indeed with wonderful correctness, considering the imperfection of his data. See particularly his map, 'Facies Palæstinæ,' and his short chapter (xliv. of lib. i.) 'De Fluminibus Terræ Transjordanicæ,' in his admirable work, 'Palæstinæ ex Monumentis Veteribus Illustrata.'—Traj. Bat. 1714.

* The above general account of Gilead has been drawn up from the various particulars dispersed in Lord Lindsay's large account (ii. 99, 101, 109, 120, 124, 126, 142), with the help of ideas previously derived from Burckhardt, Buckingham, and Irby and Mangles.

† At p. 422. of this work.

this work (p. 423.); and in fact, the account there given of the country is a summary of all the information we possess, and we shall be able to add but little to it in this place.

The views among the mountains on the south of the Zerka are, perhaps, less magnificent, but to the full as beautiful as in those to the north of that river. Lord Lindsay thinks he could distinguish three stages in these mountains,—the upper, chiefly productive of the prickly-oak and arbutus,—the central, of prickly-oak, arbutus, and fir,—while the lower slopes, particularly to the northward, are invested with the prickly-oak and the valonidis. This traveller draws a glowing picture of the beauty of the northward slopes. The descending paths wind through thickets of the most luxurious growth, and of every shade of verdure, frequently overshadowing the road and diffusing a delicious coolness; though a delightful breeze, blowing freshly over the slopes, so allays the heat that it is never oppressive. In this most pleasant region the ear is also regaled with notes of happiness from the tenants of the thickets and the woods—"the cooing of the wood-pigeons, the calling of partridges—magnificent birds as large as pheasants,—the incessant hum of insects, and hiss of grasshoppers, singing in the trees as happy as kings."

We will not allow ourselves to speak further of the mountains of this country; but of the plains and valleys, generally, it may be observed that the soil is exuberantly fertile, and, in the small portions which are cultivated, affords rich returns to the cultivator. It seems, in fact, that the wheat grown in this region, the size of the grains, and the number of grains in the ear, far exceed what is common. The country also abounds in rich pastures; which is true, indeed, of almost all the country east of the Jordan, whence it is now, in its desolate condition, much resorted to by the Bedouins with their flocks. And in the time of Moses it was so eminently "a land for cattle," that the tribes of Reuben and Gad, who "had much cattle," sought and obtained (with the addition of the half-tribe of Manasseh) to have it assigned to them expressly on that account.*

The population of the land of Moab, in particular, was fully equal to its fertility, as is evinced by the numerous sites of ancient towns which occur on every eminence or spot convenient for their construction. The valleys through which streams flow at any time of the year are generally beautifully wooded. We have no room to describe particular valleys or plains. A few of the more elevated plains are very stony, many are covered with a fine grassy turf, and some are so thickly wooded as to take the character of forests. The appearances of spontaneous fertility considerably decline as we advance southward, and the scenery takes a less pleasing aspect. We pass tracts of chalky soil covered with flints. On the south-east the prolific mould gives place to a sort of clayey and stony soil: while the desert sands encroach on the south; and on the south-west the salt of Sodom intrudes, and covers the neighbouring tracts with unmitigated desolation.†

We have now to turn our attention to the Haouran. The boundaries and mineralogical character of this district have been indicated in a preceding page (441.). This extensive plain has the countries of Bashan and Gilead on the west, and on the east the mountains and rocky tracts which form the boundary of the Great Syrian Desert. The northern part of it was probably included under the denomination of Bashan; and the whole may be concluded to have been at one time in the occupation of the tribe of Manasseh, if Gad had not also a share of it.

In its general character, the plain of Haouran resembles that of the Belka in the land of Moab, and of Esdraelon in Galilee, in having gentle undulations, the same level being nowhere of long continuation, although still not so much above or below each other as to destroy its general character, as an irregular undulating plain, the whole surface of which offers nothing that deserves to be called a hill.‡ The eminences that here and there break its continuity are mostly small veins of rock projecting above the surface, and these appear to have been in all cases selected for the sites of towns, for the sake of securing a commanding position, a freer air, a drier soil, and convenient access to the materials of building, which are indeed thus close at hand.

The soil is excellent for corn, whence the plain seems to have been in all ages regarded as the granary of Syria. It still supports that character; although now great part of it lies fallow for want of the cultivating hand, and teems only with wild flowers. "It must have been," as Robinson observes, "an agreeable and imposing prospect, indeed, to those who looked down upon its rich productions, at the time when the whole was brought under culture by the numerous and industrious Roman colonies that once inhabited these territories—its golden crops bending submissively under the breezes that crossed its surface, like the smooth undulations of the wide ocean, and, like it, having no other boundary than the horizon itself."

There are few springs in this district: but water is here indispensable to cultivation with the best possible soil; and hence the population of the Haouran owes its means of existence and the success of its agriculture, to the numerous winter-torrents descending from the eastern mountains of Jebel Haouran, which traverse the plain. Few of these inundate the land; but the inhabitants make the best use of the water to irrigate the fields after the great rains have ceased. It is from these wadys that the numerous reservoirs are filled, which supply both men and cattle with water till the return of the rainy season. In all this plain, as in every other district, on both sides of the Jordan, where there are no springs, the cultivation follows the course of these winter-torrents, as in Egypt it follows the course of the Nile. The only, or by far the chief, evil to which the cultivator is here exposed, is a season of deficient rain; and, under severe drought, not only the harvests, but the rich pastures of the uncultivated parts, utterly dry up and wither. The whole of this country seems a desert in the maps; but it is, in fact, full of villages—more villages than there are people to occupy. These are ancient villages, apparently built when the country was rich and populous under the Romans,—not in ruins, but in a perfectly habitable condition, and to some extent inhabited. This is owing to the extraordinary durability of the buildings, which are entirely of stone—even to the doors* and door-posts, without the least portion of wood or other perishable material. This mode of construction, while it arose, in the first instance, from the want of wood—as there are no timber-trees, or hardly *any* trees in all the plain—has ensured, in a remarkable degree, the preservation of the houses in a condition of extraordinary freshness. The houses in these villages are free property to the inhabitants of the Haouran, who live in them rent-free, and when they are tired of one village remove to another as seems convenient to them. Those who first arrive appropriate the best houses, but they have no right in them, nor desire to have any, longer than they continue to occupy them. There being more houses and villages than can be occupied, while no ties of property exist, removals are frequent, and scarcely a man can be found who is a native of the place in which he lives. Hence, also, some travellers find villages to be void of inhabitants which others had found to be inhabited, and the reverse.

The public buildings in the *towns* have suffered more, as might be expected, and are, for the most part, in fact, in ruins. They are all Roman; and, with the villages, satisfactorily evince how prosperous and populous this country† was under their rule: while the vast labour and expense which were bestowed by them on public walks, destined to promote the comfort, and even the luxury of the inhabitants of the towns in their distant colonies, is evinced by the numerous remains of amphitheatres, paved roads, aqueducts, and reservoirs, which are still of vast service to the inhabitants. Works of this sort are, indeed, so numerous and important, in this and other districts east of the Jordan, that Mr. Buckingham could say, that "neither in the East nor West Indies, at the Cape of Good Hope, New South Wales, nor any other of the many colonial possessions of Great Britain, are there any works, even at their respective capitals (fortresses alone excepted), which can be compared for magnificence or utility with the enormous public works scattered over the region of Decapolis, and attached to the colonial towns of the Romans, of so little importance, even in their estimation, that not even their names have descended to us in the annals of their empire."

This same traveller was struck by the height of the stone doorways, about seven feet, while in Palestine and other parts of Syria they are rather below than above the human stature, so that in most cases the passenger is obliged to stoop as he enters. But a good house includes a large room or stable for cattle; and it seems

* Num. xxxii.

† More particular information concerning this country than we are able to give may be found in Burckhardt, Seetzen, Irby and Mangles, Buckingham ('Arab Tribes'), Lord Lindsay, the Rev. A. Stanley, and M. de Saulcey.

‡ "The Haouran is an immense plain, very rich and fertile, sometimes slightly undulating, sometimes flat as a pancake,—with here and there low rounded hills, like dumplings, conspicuous from a great distance, and excellent landmarks."—Lord Lindsay, ii. 129.

* Few of the stone *doors* remain in use; but those which are still found entire, with the fragments of others, with the indications about the door-posts, render it manifest that most of the doors were anciently of stone.

† Called by them Auranitis; but, in the extent now viewed, the present Haouran seems also to have included at least a considerable part of Ituræa.

the doors are made so high to admit camels under shelter at night, and thus secure them from the incursions of the Bedouins. This flat country must always have been, as it is now, a camel country, and, from the indestructible nature of their materials, the rooms for their reception may have been of the highest antiquity.

"During our journey though the [western] hills," says Mr. Buckingham, "we had seen only horses, mules, and asses, used as beasts of burden; but since we have entered the plain of Haouran, we have met only camels, and these to the number of several hundreds in the course of one day. If this were really the land of Uz,* and the town (Gherbee) in which we now halted the place of Job's residence, as tradition maintains, there would be no portion of all Syria or Palestine that I have yet seen more suited to the production and maintenance of the 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 she-asses, which are enumerated as forming the substance of 'the greatest of all the men of the East' (Job. i. 3). At the present day there is no man, probably, with such herds and flocks for his portion; but these are still, as they were in the earliest times, the great wealth of the men of substance in the country: and it is as common now as it appears to have been when the history of Job was written, to describe a man of consideration in these plains by the number of his flocks and herds, rather than by any other less tangible indication of wealth."†

It is difficult to say what were the limits of the LAND OF THE AMMONITES. Indeed it is not easy to find room, adequate to their relative importance, for the several tribes or nations which the Scriptures place in the country east of the Jordan. There are, however, large tracts of country, south of the Haouran and east of Moab, which remain to be explored; and although travellers have *heard* that all this country is desert, we should not be surprised if it proves that those districts form as fine a country as the Haouran or the plains of Moab, with, perhaps, as ample indications of a formerly dense and active population. The term "desert" is very loosely applied; and travellers are too apt to conclude that all which they do not see is not worth seeing. Within our own times, much of the country which we have now been describing was regarded as much a desert as that unexplored region which is now indicated as bearing that character. There was plenty of room for the Ammonites to spread in this direction, to the extent of that idea which the Scriptural accounts seem to give of the relative importance of this branch of the family of Lot. Their territories may also well have reached beyond the Zerka into the southern parts of the Haouran—a name which described the country without any reference to its occupiers. There is a chain of hills commencing near the Zerka, at about the distance of forty miles east of the Jordan, by the name of Jebel el Zoble, and which is continued southward under different names, and at a diminishing distance from the Dead Sea. Extensive plains lie *between* these hills and the hill country of Moab; and beyond them, eastward, all *is said* to be desert. Now as it happens that the remains of a site which still bears the name of *Amman*, and which was doubtless originally that of Rabbah, the capital of the Ammonites, have been found upon the hills at the north-western border of this plain, it might be safe to give them as much of this plain itself as might not interfere with the claims of their brethren the Moabites, besides the very possible extension into the southern parts of the Haouran and into the "desert" beyond the eastern hills. Confining our attention to the known part which we have not yet described—which is the eastern and northern part of these enclosed plains—we may observe that even this has been little explored by travellers. Seetzen, Burckhardt, and Irby and Mangles, only traversed the south-western portion, belonging, as we suppose, to Moab; and the more easterly route of Buckingham, from Amman to Om el Russas, ran about twelve miles from the eastern hills; and he, therefore, with Mr. G. Robinson, who saw something also of this part, are the only travellers who supply any available information.

Proceeding from Amman southward, through the plain, we find everywhere a fertile soil capable of the highest cultivation, but entirely uncultivated. A broad Roman road extends completely through it, and far beyond it. The plain seems to have a slight ascent for sixteen miles, where the highest point is reached in an elevation which commands a view over a still more extensive plain than that which has been passed, lying on a somewhat lower level. "Throughout its whole extent were seen ruined towns in every direction, both before, behind, and on each side of us; generally seated on small eminences, all at a short distance from each other; and all, as far as we had yet seen, bearing evident marks of former opulence and consideration. There was not a tree in sight as far as the eye could reach; but my guide, who had been over every part of it, assured me that the whole plain was covered with the finest soil, and capable of being the most productive corn land in the world. It is true that for a space of thirty miles there did not appear to me a single interruption of hill, rock, or wood, to impede immediate tillage; and it is certain that the great plain of Esdraelon, so justly celebrated for its extent and fertility, is inferior in both to this plain. Like Esdraelon, it appears also to have been once the seat of an active and numerous population; but on the former the monuments of the dead only remain, while here the habitations of the living are equally mingled with the tombs of the departed, both thickly strewn over every part of the soil from which they drew their sustenance."

Om el Russas, the most southern point which has been reached in this direction, is about forty-two miles S.S.E. from Amman. After the first eighteen or twenty miles, the quality of the soil differs, from having a larger proportion of clay, but it still continues fertile and highly cultivable. But after leaving a place called Om el Koseer, which is twenty-five miles from Amman, it appears to grow progressively inferior, though for the most part still capable of cultivation. The face of the country also becomes more unequal, and the level descends; and before we reach our limit the ground becomes stony, chalky, and barren. The unexplored country southward is no doubt desert.

In short, this country, or series of plains, has a rich soil, but is without trees or shrubs. The ground is highly cultivable, but exhibits not the least trace of actual cultivation; and while numerous ruins indicate how rich and populous the country once was, it is now, more than even the Haouran, without fixed inhabitants. The wandering tribes resort to it in the summer months, for the sake of the pasturage which it offers; but when they have left, the ashes and dung of their encampments are the only signs of human occupation which the country affords. "It is now one vast desert, which has long ceased to be occupied by man in a civilised state."* Thus truly has Ammon become "a desolation," as the prophets foretold.†

Although there are not, properly speaking, any deserts in Palestine itself, the deserts by which it is bounded on the east, and on the south, figure so largely in the history of the country, and exercised so manifest an influence on the condition and relations of its inhabitants, as well as on their ideas and sentiments, that it is quite necessary to bestow upon them a concluding portion of our attention.

The best and most satisfactory general description of these deserts is that which has been supplied by Volney;‡ and having tested this account by some information in our own possession, and by the statements of various travellers who have crossed the desert he describes, we have judged it best to adopt it as the basis of the following account.

To form an idea of these deserts, the reader must imagine a glowing and unclouded sky, over plains so vast that the view is lost in them; and entirely destitute of buildings, trees, rivulets, or hills. Often in these plains the eye meets nothing but an extensive and uniform horizon like the sea; while a few isolated palm-trees, here and there, complete the illusion by appearing in the distance like the masts of ships. In other parts the undulated surface suggests the idea of a stormy sea,§ while in others it is roughened

* At Gherbee, near the western borders of the plain towards Bashan, the tradition is, that Job was born and lived there, or in that quarter, and that there is the scene of his history as detailed in the sacred volume.

† Burckhardt, 51-121, 211-250; Buckingham, 167, 171, 180, 251, &c.; Robinson, ii. 137, 161, 168; Lindsay, ii. 129, 130.

* Buckingham's 'Arab Tribes,' 82-99; Robinson, ii. 171, 180.

† Dr. Keith, in his popular work on 'Evidence from Prophecy,' describes the Haouran as the land of the Ammonites. But it is not likely that they ever had more than perhaps a portion of the south of that vast plain. The district which we have now described would have answered his laudable purpose as well or better, and it may with far greater probability than the Haouran be assigned to the Ammonites. In Dr. Keith's remarkable book, the parts which refer to *towns* are by much the most valuable. When there is a determined site, such facts and observations as those which this author has collected apply with great force and effect: but in those portions which refer to the state of the "Lands" of certain ancient nations, there is, perhaps necessarily, much vague and uncertain matter, and the result is comparatively ineffective to the instructed reader.

‡ Baron Taylor bears witness to its value by copying it entire, with some slight alterations and additions, into his publication 'La Syrie'.

§ The comparisons, here employed, of the desert to the sea in various conditions, are so common that they have become trite. Yet, we can answer for it, they are ever the first and last impressions which strike a traveller, and are, therefore, natural and proper. The reader who would like to trace the varying characteristics of the desert between Syria and the Euphrates cannot do better than consult the daily entries in Colonel Capper's 'Observations on the Passage to India, through Egypt and across the Great Desert' (1783).

by rocks and stones. Almost always arid, the land offers only some wild plants, thinly scattered, and thickets, whose solitude is rarely disturbed but by gazelles, hyænas, hares, jerboas, and locusts. Such is the character of nearly the whole country, which extends 600 leagues in length and 300 in breadth, stretching from Aleppo to the Arabian Sea, and from Egypt to the Persian Gulf.

In such an extent of country there is, however, considerable variation of soil. Upon the frontiers of Syria, for example, which is that portion of this immense desert with which we have most concern, the soil is in general rich, cultivable, and fertile. It is of the same character on the banks of the Euphrates. But in the internal parts of the country, and towards the south, it becomes white and chalky, as in the parallel of Damascus, then stony as we advance into the deserts of El Tyh and of the Hedjaz, and ultimately pure sand, as to the east of Yemen. These variations produce corresponding differences in the condition of the inhabiting tribes. In the districts where the herbage is scarce or meagre, as in the Nedjed and in the interior of the great desert, the tribes are feeble and very distant. They become less rare and nearer to one another in those parts where the soil is less bare and the oases more frequent, as between Damascus and the Euphrates, and in the cultivable cantons of the Aleppo pashalic, in the Haouran; and in the country of Gaza the Arab camps are numerous and contiguous. In the first case, the Bedouins are a purely pastoral people, living on the produce of their flocks and on a few dates; in the second, they are demi-cultivators, and sow some land, which enables them to add to their fare a little rice and barley.

This invincible sterility of the desert, even where the soil is naturally fertile, or where not absolutely sandy, is entirely owing to the absence of water; and this want of water is occasioned by the nature of the country, which being flat and destitute of mountains which might arrest the clouds, they glide over its heated surface during nine months of the twelve without affording a single drop of rain. Thus, during the day, the sky sparkles in brilliance, and is of the finest azure during the night. In winter only, when the cold of the atmosphere condenses the clouds, they soon resolve themselves in showers; but in the interior of the desert the water thus supplied is very quickly absorbed by the arid sands. Upon the borders only it affords an irrigation by which the natural fecundity of the soil is awakened. The summer comes; and all this water disappears without any durable result in springs or perennial brooks. Hence, to avoid the inconvenience of wanting water the whole summer, it has been necessary to form, by manual labour, wells, cisterns, and reservoirs, in which to preserve a supply of rain-water for the year. Such works, though rude and inadequate, are expensive and laborious, and are therefore of rare occurrence, except in the more settled districts. Besides, war may destroy in one day the labour of many months and the resources of the year. A drought, which is but too common, may cause the failure of a crop, and reduce the inhabitants to a total want of water. It is true that, by digging, water may almost everywhere be found at from six to twenty feet deep, but this is generally brackish, and the supply is soon exhausted. Then thirst and famine supervene; and unless the government interferes, the villages are deserted. From this it results that the condition of agriculture is, in such border districts, most precarious,* and the establishments are constantly menaced with ruin; and when to this operation of natural causes is added the weight with which the exactions of the government press upon the cultivator, it must often seem the better choice to lead a wandering life than to reside in a fixed habitation and rely on agriculture for subsistence.

In those districts where the soil is stony and sandy, as in the deserts between Palestine and Sinai, in which the hosts of Israel spent forty years, and in those of the Hedjaz and the Nedjed, these winter rains make the seeds of the wild plants shoot, and revive the thickets, the ranunculuses, the wormwood, the kali, and the numerous other plants and herbs with which the desert then abounds. They render the lower grounds marshy, which then produce reeds and grass, and the plain assumes a tolerable degree of verdure.

Major Skinner, who crossed at this season the desert between Damascus and Babylonia, describes it as having then nothing appalling but the name—as being, in fact, a perfect garden, in which it is easy for the traveller to mark his progress by the plants he meets, as every day exhibits the predominance of some new race.

But all this glory of the desert, which supplies so many metaphors to the prophetic writers, is most transitory. On the return of the heats, everything is parched up, and the earth, converted into a gray and fine dust, presents nothing but dry stems, as hard as wood, on which no animals can feed.

Yet even the desert is not without such immunities and congenial charms as endear it to its wild inhabitants as much as the most fertile and pleasant country can be endeared to a civilised people. Its clime is more fixed and salubrious than that of the countries by which it is bordered. The plague is scarcely known; ophthalmia is very rare; and the small-pox may be described as the only endemic malady. The Arab tribes have, from remote times, divided these wide and arid sands among themselves. These territorial divisions are necessarily of very great extent, as it often happens that the desert in an extent of thirty miles offers only a few roods of land where the flocks can find even a dry and scanty herbage. Thus, in order to obtain nourishment for a few cattle, the Arabs are obliged to overrun vast tracts, and this has engaged them to the nomade life. But besides this physical reason, which explains and justifies the Bedouin condition of existence, there are others of a political sort which are not less operative. For if, in fact, their migratory habits only proceeded from the nakedness of their country, they could advance into the fertile districts along their frontiers, and form there nearly permanent encampments, as the Hebrew patriarchs did in Palestine,—ending by founding villages, like the Turkomans and Koords. But they do not do this. They choose rather to dwell in plains the most naked, in steppes the most inaccessible. And why? It is because that which the Arab values before all other things is his independence, his complete isolation from every form of superiority or patronage, whether mild or onerous, cruel or clement. That which the Bedouins most seek is to keep themselves from the position which might lead them or compel them to bear arms for the pashas, and thus to be at liberty to pursue what they consider their proper trade of rapine and theft. This is the great motive to them for preserving a mode of life which renders such continual and fatiguing removals necessary. But if they chance to light upon a place where they think they can enjoy security and freedom, joined to adequate resources, they remain there, and insensibly pass into the condition of settled cultivators. But if it happens, on the contrary, that the vexatious tyranny of a governor puts an end to the patience of an established village, it is no unusual thing for the inhabitants to flee in a body to the mountains, or into the plains, often changing their stations that they may not be surprised. Sometimes it happens that such people, after having become robbers from the necessities of their position, form new hordes and ultimately class themselves into tribes. But these new people, born in a cultivable country, almost never quit the frontiers, and never without great difficulty arrive at the determination to throw themselves into the heart of the desert. The desert is the exclusive domain of the Arab, who is born in it.

We have not been able to withhold these facts, as they appear to us to contribute much illustration to many circumstances which the sacred history records, and to the conditions and mutations of life which it exhibits. We thus see by what process the migratory inhabitants of the desert become, like the Hebrews, a settled agricultural people; and again, how the people settled on the borders may melt away into the great Bedouin mass. The tendency of such people to remain as near as possible to their original seats would be a most interesting circumstance, if it should authorise us to conclude, or even to conjecture, that the descendants of Lot and Esau may still be found among the Bedouins, who are now almost the sole inhabitants of the lands of Moab, Ammon, and Edom.

It may seem proper to follow this general statement, by a somewhat more particular notice of the country between Palestine and Egypt, and between Palestine and Sinai which forms the desert—or rather portion of the desert—best known to the Hebrews at all times, and unquestionably that in which their forty years of wandering were passed. Indeed, in memory of this, the whole still bears the name of El Tyh—the Wandering—which is also borne by the ridge of mountains that separates it on the south from the Upper Sinai: in Scripture different parts of it seem to be called by different names; but that which seems capable of the largest application to the whole is "the wilderness, or desert, of Paran."

"The space comprised between the Delta, the extremity of the Red Sea, and the Mediterranean, contains in the north-west some cultivated lands, watered by the derivations of the Nile. The rest, absolutely arid, forms what are called the deserts of the isthmus of Suez; towards the south-east vast sandy plains extend along the Mediterranean to Syria, and connect themselves with those

* Even the Haouran comes within this description. There are times when all the hopes of the year are destroyed by the failure or inadequacy of the winter rains. Such was the case at the time of Mr. Buckingham's visit to that quarter.

which adjoin the Dead Sea and Palestine."* Such is the information, good as far as it goes, which at the end of the last century was obtained by the French *savans*. Since then more detailed information has been supplied from various sources.

The reader is very apt to imagine that the whole is a dead and arid level. But this is by no means the case, the irregularity of the surface and diversity of appearance being considerable.

Only the maritime borders, on either hand, of that part of the peninsula of Sinai which lies north of the Tyh mountains have been described. For Mr. Arundale, who did traverse the interior, gives only a few slight hints, which just enabled us to conclude that, as the connection might suggest, one general character belongs to all the desert which extends, from south to north, about 100 miles, from the ridge of El Tyh to the tract of high and barren mountains which occur about 75 miles to the south of Hebron; and from east to west, about 240 miles, being from the vicinity of Cairo to the Valley of Arabah. This great tract of country, or rather that principal portion of it which lies to the east of the isthmus of Suez, is the proper El Tyh desert.

This then may be described, after the information of Professor Robinson, as a vast unbounded plain, its surface not sandy, but, for the most part, of a hard gravel, often strewed with pebbles. Numerous wadys, or watercourses, intersect it; and in most of these are to be found some scattered tufts of herbs or shrubs, on which the camels browse as they pass along, and which serve also as their pasturage when turned loose at night. Irregular ridges of limestone hills are seen in various directions. The mirage frequently occurs. Wells are found at considerable distances, and the water is in all of them drinkable, though none seem to be exempt from that mineral [sometimes sulphureous] taste so commonly found in the wells of the desert. This desert is, in fact, an elevated plateau, much above the level of the Red Sea, and as high or higher than the tops of the mountains by which we ascend to it, whether from the southern valleys of Sinai, or from its eastern or western shore, or from behind Akabah, or from the Wady el Arabah.†

Advancing upon this plain from the south or the south-east, we have before us, as a land-mark, a high conical mountain. It is in view at least three days before we come to it, and in the distance appears isolated. It bears the name of Jebel Araif-en-Nakah, and a lower ridge extends from it eastward. As we approach it, the country becomes undulating and uneven, and the hills more frequent. The mountain itself forms the south-eastern corner or bulwark of a mountainous region which extends hence to the northward, and from it a ridge stretches east terminating in a bluff called Makrah, near the Arabah and opposite Mount Hor. After passing this mountain the character of the desert is changed. On our right is now a mountainous district composed of irregular limestone ridges, running in various directions, and filling the whole country eastward quite to Wady Arabah. The road passes along the western side of this mountainous district, crossing many broad wadys, which flow down from it westward, with elevated ridges of table-land between them. Beyond the district thus described, the country opens into wide sandy plains, in which Dr. Robinson [who had already been in Egypt and Sinai] had his first experience of the simoom. This character of the desert is preserved till we reach Wady Ruheibah, which, being thus on the borders of the sandy desert, we have before agreed to consider as the southern frontier of Palestine.

Of the extraordinary visitations to which the deserts are subject, the hot wind, called by the Arabs the *simoom*, and by the Turks *samiel*, both of which words mean the *poison-wind*, seems the most remarkable and injurious. The accounts which are given by different persons vary so greatly, that it is difficult to deduce from them a connected statement of facts; and some writers have gone so far as to discredit the stronger effects which have been ascribed to this phenomenon. The fact seems to us to be, that, in this, as in a thousand other matters, people infer analogies between what they do see and what they do not see; and in this they may be, and often are, wrong, from not knowing, or not taking into account, the circumstances by which differences and modifications may be and are produced. Travellers, whose routes almost always lie along the borders of the great desert, and who never visit those vast interior solitudes of sand which only the natives dare to traverse, witness only these phenomena in the most mild and mitigated forms, and thoughtlessly infer that they must be equally mild in the very heart of the desert, although they know that the causes which produce them must there be operating with more intense effect. What we ourselves deduce from the balance of testimonies is, that these phenomena are exhibited with diminished force the greater our distance from the heart of the desert is increased; and that the travellers who describe those mitigated phenomena which alone they noticed in their border routes, have no right to deny the concurrent testimony of history and of the natives, which ascribes to them stronger developments and more ruinous effects in the interior of the desert.

The simoom blows generally from the direction of the nearest sandy deserts; in Syria from those of Arabia, and in Egypt from those of Africa. Dr. Russell informs us that "the *true* simoom" (by which expression he seems to have felt the necessity for such a distinction as we have now made) never reaches so far north as Aleppo, nor is common in the desert between that city and Busrah. He was, however, careful to collect the reports of the Arabs, which he thus states:—"They assert that its progression is in separate or distinct currents, so that the caravan, which in its march in the desert sometimes spreads to a great breadth, suffers only partially in certain places of the line, while the intermediate parts remain untouched. That sometimes those only who happen to be mounted on camels are affected, though more commonly such as are on foot; but that both never suffer alike. That lying flat on the ground till the blast passes over is the best method of avoiding the danger, but that the attack is sometimes so sudden as to leave no time for precaution. Its effects sometimes prove instantly fatal, the corpse being livid, or black, like that of a person blasted by lightning; at other times it produces putrid fevers, which prove mortal in a few hours; and that very few of those who have been struck recover." This is not all they tell. The attention of Thevenot was strongly drawn to the subject, and he made particular inquiries concerning it, at the towns on the borders of the desert, of different persons in different places. He says, that they all agreed in their testimony, which is the same in substance as that which has just been adduced, with the additions,—which, we know, form part of the current account among the natives,—"No sooner does a man die by this wind than he becomes black as a coal, and if one take him by the leg, arm, or any other place, his flesh comes off from the bone, and is plucked off by the hand that would lift him up. They say that in this wind there are streaks of fire as small as a hair, which have been seen by some, and that those who breathe in those rays of fire die of them, the rest receiving no damage." We willingly confess that there are some points in these statements which savour of exaggeration; but we consider that, taking the whole of these reports at their lowest value, they evince at least that the simoom is sometimes productive of immediately fatal effects in the interior of the deserts. Most of the described phenomena suggest a highly electrical state of the atmosphere, and the symptoms of immediate putrefaction are such as occur in cases of death by lightning.

The *mitigated* effects of this wind, as experienced and reported by European travellers, may thus be described.

The Arabs, and others accustomed to the deserts, are aware of the signs which portend a coming simoom, and if they make the discovery before a day's journey is commenced, cannot be induced to depart from their station until it has overpast. Even the cattle are aware of the approaching evil, and manifest their uneasiness by plaintive cries and other tokens of distress. All animated nature seems to take alarm, and to throw itself upon the defensive. The horizon gradually assumes a dull purplish or violet hue, while the sun becomes shorn of its beams, and looks red and heavy, as through a London fog. Then comes on the hot wind, laden with a subtile and burning dust, or rather fine sand, which penetrates to all things; the atmosphere becomes exceedingly hot, and the air, less even from its heat* than from its noxious qualities, and the particles with which it is laden, is breathed with difficulty; and even under the shelter of a tent, and with every possible precaution and safeguard, the effect is most distressing. It fires, burns, dries up the lungs, the mouth is parched, the skin dry, and a feeling of universal debility prevails, while the pulse rises as in fever. Life seems attacked in its most delicate organs; and there is much reason to think that any prolonged subjection to even this greatly mitigated form of the evil would be attended with serious consequences; and still more if no measures of protection against it were sought. Mr. Madden, who was exposed to a somewhat slight simoom in the desert of Suez, and remained in his tent while it lasted (above seven hours), describes the sensation as inexpressibly

* Roziere, 'De la Constitution Physique de l'Egypte,' 301, 302.

† This appears from comparing the estimations of Burckhardt, Laborde, Robinson and Arundale.

* Fynes Moryson (not the Morison we have so often cited) compares the inspiring of this air to the hasty swallowing of too hot broth!—a homely but expressive comparison.

distressing; but he does not think it was the degree of heat that occasioned it, for in Upper Egypt he had suffered an equally high temperature* without any such prostration of strength and spirits. But he believes the hot wind of the desert to be connected with an electrical state of the atmosphere, which has a depressing influence on the nervous system. And this, it will be remembered, is the opinion of a medical man. (*)

In Egypt, where, as in Palestine, this wind is much less alarming than even in the border deserts, it exchanges its name of *simoom* for that of *kamseen* (fifty), because it is felt the most frequently during fifty days about the vernal equinox.

It is not so much alleged, generally, that the naked operation of the simoom is so destructive, even in the interior of the great deserts, as the immense drifts and whirlwinds of sand which it raises. We have seen that there are some indications of this,—that it fills the air with fine sand, even in the border deserts; and how much more, then, in those vast interior expanses, where, even in a state of rest, the immense hills† of sand thrown up by the winds, and left to be swept away and removed by some future storms, bear evidence to the operations of the wind upon these sandy surfaces. Immense clouds of sand are, under the operation of the wind, raised high in air, and in their ultimate fall overwhelm whatever lies below. Often the whirling eddies of the wind condense the drifting sands into more compact masses, causing them to spindle up into tall and rounded columns, which, still acted upon by the power which reared and sustains them, keep moving over the plain till they fall in a hill or wide-spread sheet of sand. Thus the surface of the desert is, to a considerable depth, in frequent motion; and thus, we are told, caravans and entire armies have been slain and buried by the concurrent effects of the hot wind, and of the immense masses of sand which it drifts so furiously along. To such a cause history attributes the loss of the army which the mad Persian conqueror, Cambyses, sent across the desert against the inhabitants of the oasis of Ammon. Happily these sand-storms, in their more terrible forms, are far from common; else no one could adventure to pass the desert. They are also less frequent and less formidable in the deserts of south-western Asia than in those of Africa, westward from Egypt, where the tracts of sand are more extensive, and seem to be more easily set in motion.

As the simoom usually moves at a certain height in the atmosphere, the common resource against its effects is, as already intimated, to lie flat on the ground till it passes over. Man was probably taught this resource by observing that, at such times, camels and other animals bend their heads to the ground and bury their nostrils in the sand. Shelter from the sand-storm is sought in nearly the same manner. The traveller generally lies down on the lee side of his camel; but, as the sands are soon drifted around him to the level of his body, both the beast and its owner are obliged frequently to rise and change their position, to avoid being entirely covered. If the storm is of long duration, as it often is, this constant exertion, with the effects of the hot wind, and the dread and danger of the sandy inundation, produces such weariness, sleepiness, or despair, that both men and animals remain on the ground, and a very short time suffices to bury them under the sands. It is thus chiefly that the simoom becomes extremely destructive to the life of man and beasts. It is easy, in our own cool and quiet country, to sit down and doubt about these things; but the whitened bones which strew the desert bear witness to their truth. And any one who, at even a safe season of the year, has passed over such wastes, and during the halt of his caravan has lain down for rest upon the sand, wrapped up in his cloak, must, like the writer of this, have felt a very serious conviction of the probability of such events. The only marked objects in the sandy desolation are the huge hillocks of drifted sand; and he knows that such winds as formed them will disperse them all abroad over the face of the land; and he knows not but that, after the next storm, a mound of sand may cover the place whereon he lies.

These showers and whirlwinds of sand, or of sand and dust, or of dust only, according to the nature of the country, were certainly known to the Hebrews. Their then recent experience in the desert taught them to know the full intensity of those visitations with which Moses denounced that God would scourge their disobedience: "Thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass; and the earth that is under thee shall be iron. The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust; *from heaven shall it come down upon thee until thou be destroyed.*" (Deut. xxviii. 23, 24.)

The threat of dust to the land instead of rain brings to mind the tendency of the drifted sands to encroach upon the cultivable lands of the borders. The tendency of actual cultivation is to repel such encroachments; but, where cultivation is discontinued, a very serious loss of cultivable soil is in the course of time incurred. Ample proof of this may be seen on the south and the south-east borders of the Holy Land, showing the actual fulfilment of the denunciation we have adduced. Here again the desert is comparable to the sea; for, as the sea encroaches on the land, so do the sands encroach upon the cultivable soil. (Deut. xxxii. 10.*)

This text might also be adduced in support of the statement that ascribes largely-destructive powers to these visitations. They have not been unknown even in the northernmost parts of Syria. Witness William of Tyre's account of the whirlwind of sand to which he ascribes the victory of the Moslems over the prince of Antioch, in the territory of that name.† And we might, therefore, expect them to be still more common in Palestine, as they are in Egypt and in other countries bordering on extensive plains. Moses describes the desert in which the Israelites wandered for forty years as "a desert land in the waste howling wilderness" (Deut. xxxii. 10); and as "that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water" (Deut. viii. 15), and of which Jeremiah (Jer. ii. 6) more amply speaks as of "a land of deserts and of pits, a land of drought and of the shadow of death, a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt." And that among the characteristics indicated in these terms those which we have described may, to some extent, be comprehended, is shown by the account which William of Tyre gives of the march of Syracon, general of the army of Noureddin, Emir of Damascus, and uncle of the famous Saladin, into this very desert, between Syria and Egypt, in which the Israelites wandered so long. During the march the troops were encountered by a whirlwind of such force, that it raised into the air vast clouds of sand, which obscured the sun and occasioned a thick darkness. So densely filled was the air by the sandy particles, that no one dared to open his mouth or eyes, to speak to another or to look around him. The horsemen deemed it prudent to dismount; and many prostrated themselves and dived their hands deep into the sand, to obtain such fast hold as might prevent the wind from whirling them up, and breaking their necks or legs in casting them again to the ground. Some of the men did lose their lives; many camels also were lost, and most of the provisions; and the army was, for the time, quite dispersed by the storm. "For in this desert," says the historian, using the standard comparison, "waves of sand are raised and tossed about like the waves of the sea when troubled by tempestuous winds; so that to navigate a stormy sea is, at times, not more dangerous than to pass such deserts."‡

Another phenomenon of the desert is the *mirage*. This is an illusion, producing the most cruel disappointment to those who traverse the dry and sandy plains, as it assumes precisely the appearances most calculated to delight the traveller and to seduce him from his way. Sometimes he sees before him a fine lake; but if, in the eagerness of thirst and heat, he hastens towards it, the margin seems to retire, so that the surface of water as he advances becomes narrower, and at last disappears altogether; but the whole appearance may be again exhibited before him at the same distance as that at which it was first observed. All this time the impatient traveller will seem, to those who have remained behind, to have reached the margin, to have entered the lake, and to have forded it to the other side. Or again, there may seem to be the fair similitude of a green oasis, with its tufted palms, traversed by a broad river. In such cases the illusion of water is complete: for not only are the bushes or other objects which may be on the margin reflected in it, but it has something like the ripple of water; and in such instances as the first is streaked by those numerous shining patches observable on the surface of lakes when viewed from a distance. The best prepared travellers are unable to resist the force of this illusion, or to believe that which they see

* "The thermometer at two o'clock rose to 110° in the shade; and on putting the bulb in the sand, outside the tent, in a few minutes the mercury was at 130°."

† In the Caspian Steppes (of pure sand) we have seen such hills at least thirty feet high, by about the same diameter.

* This is, perhaps, more strongly manifested in Egypt. Denon says,—"When this destructive scourge sets in from the desert, the inundation of sand often overwhelms the country, changes its fertility to barrenness, drives the labourer from his house, whose walls it covers up, and leaves no other mark of vegetable life than the tops of a few palm-trees, which add still more to the dreary aspect of desolation. Thus the desert is continually encroaching on the fertile land; and, were the waters of the Nile to discontinue their inundations, the whole vale of Egypt would eventually become a desert, or a vale of sand."

† 'Hist. Belli Sacri,' xii. ‡ Ib. xix. 15.

to be unreal. The cruel mockery of such an appearance, in the midst of these arid steppes, may in some degree be conceived, but not properly appreciated without actual experience. (⁴)

This phenomenon is very common even on the skirts of the desert, and must have been tolerably well known to the Hebrews. They called it by the name שרב *serab* (the desert water),* which it still bears among the Arabs, who, as well as the Persians, often use it, by a fine metaphor, to express disappointed hope. To this one prophet seems to allude when he asks, "Wilt thou be altogether unto me as waters that fail?" (Jer. xv. 18.) And there is every reason to conclude that Isaiah draws his beautiful metaphors from the apparent effects thus exhibited in the desert, when he foretels the glories of the Messiah's reign in glowing language which a poet of our own has not unworthily imitated:—

* Isa. xxxv. In verse 7, the word rendered "parched ground" in our public version, is actually this word, *serab*, by which the Arabs describe the mirage.

"The swain, in barren deserts, with surprise
Sees lilies spring, and sudden verdure rise;
And starts amidst the thirsty wilds to hear
New falls of water murmuring in his ear.
On rifted rocks, the dragons' late abodes,
The green reed trembles, and the bulrush nods;
Wide sandy valleys, late perplex'd with thorn,
The spiry fir, and shapely box, adorn;
To leafless shrubs the flowery palms succeed,
And odorous myrtle to the noisome weed." *

* Besides the authorities cited in the course of the preceding account of deserts and their phenomena, being William of Tyre, Volney, Taylor, Thevenot, Russell, Capper, Rozière, Denon, Skinner, Mr. Robinson, Madden, Dr. Robinson, Arundale, &c., the following have been consulted:—Pietro della Valle, 'Viaggi in Turchia, &c., l. xix.; Rauwolff, ii. 5; Du Bois-Aymé, 'Mémoire sur les Tribes Arabes;' Burckhardt, 'Syria' and 'Notes on the Bedouins;' Belzoni, 'Narrative of Operations,' 341-343; Wellsted, 'Travels in Arabia,' ii. 31; Stephens, i 236-238; Coutelle, 'Observations sur la Topographie de la Presqu'île de Sinai.'

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

(¹) Valley of Jehoshaphat, p. 457.—When different names are applied to the different parts of this valley it is usually thus:—The valley is divided into three parts, of which the northern is called the Valley of Kedron; the middle, the Valley of Jehoshaphat; and the southern, the Valley of Siloam—from the fountain of that name on the one side, and the village on the other. These three names are also applied, respectively, to the whole extent of the valley; but that of the valley of Siloam less frequently than the other two,—being only, that we recollect, so applied by Josephus. But it is more common to distinguish the Valley of Siloam, and apply one of the other denominations to all the rest. The other Scriptural names which have been generally thought to apply to this valley are the following:—

The Valley of Shaveh, where Melchisedeck met Abraham when he returned from the slaughter of the kings. Gen. xiv. 17. This seems a very uncertain conclusion.

The King's Dale, which, from the text just cited, was doubtless the same as the Valley of Shaveh, whether the same as the Valley of Jehoshaphat or not. In this King's Dale Absalom erected his monumental pillar. 2 Sam. xviii. 18. This name is equivalent to that of the *Royal Valley*, which it is supposed to have taken from the gardens and pleasure-houses which the kings reigning in Jerusalem had there.

The Valley of Vision is the name figuratively given to it by the prophet Isaiah (xxii. 1). But in the figurative allusions to this valley, Jerusalem itself is often intended.

The name *Jehoshaphat* means *the Judgment of Jehovah*. Joel is the only prophet who uses the name *Valley of Jehoshaphat*, and there is an evident play upon the name and its meaning in what he further says, thus,—"Come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat [*i. e.* of God's *Judgment*], for there will I *judge* all the heathen round about . . . . Multitudes, multitudes in *the Valley of Judgment*." (Joel iii. 12, 14.) This last name is rendered *Valley of Decision* in our public version; and this is the passage on which is founded not only the current name which the valley bears, but the popular notion as to its being the scene of the final judgment. If these names—even that of Jehoshaphat—apply to *any* natural valley, it is by no means clear that they apply to the valley to which this note relates. We have, therefore, called it the Valley of Jehoshaphat, merely because it is the name by which, during a long series of ages, it has the most generally been described.

These are not the only names which have been given to the valley, but all which have been given on such authority as requires our notice.

(²) The Cicer-Field, p. 458.—It seems that this legend is told with considerable variations. One account, nearly as prevalent as the other, relates the story of Christ himself, and is thus reported by Rauwolff:—

"Before you is a large valley, which, although it be rocky, yet is fruitful both of corn and wine. In it, towards the right hand, near the road, is an acre called the Cicer-Field, which had its name, as I was informed, from the following transaction. It is said that when Christ went by at a certain time, and saw a man that was sowing cicers, he did speak to him kindly, and asked him what he was a sowing there? The man answered scornfully, and said, 'He sowed small stones.' 'Then let it be,' said our Lord, 'that thou reap the same seed thou sowest.' So they say that at harvest he found, instead of the cicer-peas, nothing but small pebbles, in shape and colour and bigness like unto them exactly. Now, whether there be anything of truth in it or no I cannot affirm; but this I must say, that there are to this day such stones found in this field. For as we went by some of us went into it, and did gather a great many of them that were in bigness, shape, and colour so like unto these cicers (by the Arabians called *ommos*, and in Latin *cicer arietinum*) that we could hardly distinguish them from natural ones."

The stock of these pebbles seems to be exhausted; and with them the legend appears to have fallen into disuse, as the attention of travellers is not now directed by their guides to this spot.

(³) The Simoom, p. 468.—Lucan had most correct information. His account of the deserts of Libya, and of the sand-storm which the Roman soldiers, led by Cato, encountered in their march through them, remarkably agrees with, and illustrates, the particulars we have stated. We cannot refrain from adducing a few passages:—

"No leafy shades the naked deserts know,
No silver streams through flowery meadows flow;
But horrors there and various deaths abound,
And serpents guard th' inhospitable ground.

. . . .

No harvest there the scatter'd grain repays,
But withering dies, and, ere it shoots, decays;
There never loves to spring the mantling vine,
Nor wanton ringlets round her elm to twine.
The thirsty dust prevents the swelling fruit,
Drinks up the generous juice, and kills the root;
Through secret veins no tempering moistures pass,
To bind with viscous force the mouldering mass;
But genial Jove, averse, disdains to smile,
Forgets and curses the neglected soil.
Thence lazy Nature droops her idle head,
As every vegetable sense were dead;
Thence the wide, dreary plains one visage wear,
Alike in summer, winter, spring appear,
Nor feel the terms of the revolving year.
Their herbage here (for some ev'n here is found)
The Nasamonian hinds collect around.

. . . .

Here all at large, where nought restrains his force,
Impetuous Auster* runs his rapid course;
Nor mountains here, nor stedfast rocks resist,
But free he sweeps along the spacious list.
No stable groves of ancient oaks arise,
To tire his rage, and catch him as he flies;
But wide around the naked plains appear,
Here fierce he drives, unbounded, through the air,
Roars, and exerts his dreadful empire here.
The whirling dust, like waves in eddies wrought,
Rising aloft, to the mid heaven is caught;
There hangs, a sullen cloud, nor falls again,
Nor breaks, like gentle vapours, into rain.

. . . .

Thus wide o'er Libya raged the stormy south,
Thus every way assail'd the Latian youth.
Each several method for defence they try,
Now wrap their garments tight, now close they lie;
Now sinking to the earth with weight they press,
Now clasp it to them with a strong embrace;
Scarce in that posture safe, the driving blast
Bears hard, and almost drives them off at last.
Meantime a sandy flood comes rolling on,
And swelling heaps the prostrate legions drown.
New to the sudden danger, and dismay'd,
The frighted soldier hasty calls for aid,
Heaves at the hill, and struggling rears his head.
Soon shoots the glowing pile, and, rear'd on high,
Lifts up its lofty summit to the sky:
High sandy walls, like forts, their passage stay,
And rising mountains intercept their way:
The certain bounds which should their journey guide,
The moving earth and dusty deluge hide:
So landmarks sink beneath the flowing tide,
As through mid seas, uncertainly they move,
Led only by Jove's sacred lights above." Rowe.

* The south wind.

Denon writes much about the simoom; and from him we are tempted to cite the following passage, relating to the march of a party of Egyptian Mamelukes, who took the pass from the Kittah by the way of Redisi:—

"This pass is never frequented by the merchants, and was fatal to the Mamelukes, who, by taking this road, lost their horses, together with a part of their camels, a considerable number of their attendants, and twenty-six women out of twenty-eight. Their march was traced by their disasters, and by what they left behind them,—tents, arms, clothing, the carcases of horses starved to death, camels which were no longer able to support their burdens, attendants, and their women, whom they abandoned to their fate. I figured to myself the sufferings of a poor wretch, panting with fatigue, and expiring with thirst, his tongue parched, and breathing with difficulty the hot air by which he is consumed. He hopes that a few minutes' repose will enable him to recover his strength: he stops, and sees his companions pass by, calling on them in vain for help. The misery to which each one is a prey has banished every compassionate feeling: they proceed on their way without casting a look on him, and follow in silence the footsteps of those who precede them. They are no longer in his view,—they are fled—and his benumbed limbs, already overpowered by their painful existence, refuse their office, and cannot be stimulated to action either by danger or by terror. The caravan has passed: it appears to him like an undulating line in the wide expanse, and, becoming at length a mere point, disappears altogether, like the last glimmer of an expiring taper. He casts around him his wild and frantic looks, but can see nothing: he turns them towards himself, then closes his eyes to shun the aspect of the terrible vacuity by which he is surrounded. He hears nothing but his own sighs, and fate hovers over him to cut the thread of his existence. Alone, and without a companion to do him the last offices, he is about to expire without one single ray of hope to administer comfort to his departing soul,—and his corpse, consumed by the parched and burning soil, soon becomes a bleached skeleton, which will serve as a guide to the uncertain steps of the traveller who shall dare to brave the fate that has befallen him."

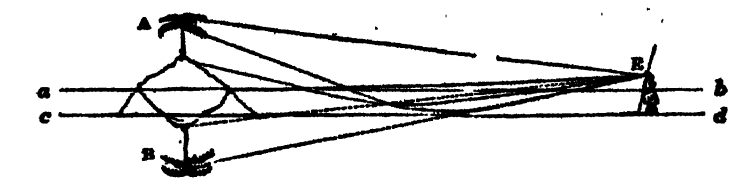
(¹) The Mirage, p. 469.—All the phenomena of the mirage, which are in considerable variety, are usually regarded as examples of unusual refraction. "As a general definition, we may say the mirage is an optical illusion, caused by the refraction of light through contiguous masses of air of different density, such refraction not unfrequently producing the same effect as direct reflection."* This difference of density may be caused either by moisture or by heat. Among mountains and near bodies of actual water it is often seen, and is then caused by moisture; and in the dry sandy deserts by heat. In the former case it is most usually seen by night or in the morning, and in the latter during the heat of the day. As the desert mirage is that which engages our attention, we may observe, with more particular reference to it, that the case is there one of diminished density in the lower stratum of the atmosphere, caused by the increase of heat, communicated by the rays of the sun to the sand, with which this stratum is in immediate contact.

The following passage, for which we are indebted to the 'Penny Cyclopædia,' shows the application to most of the phenomena of the mirage:—

"All these phenomena, and their various modifications, depend on the different density of the lower strata of the air, and as this difference of density may be occasioned both by heat and moisture, and as heat may be reverberated from the mountain's side, as well as from the horizontal surface of the plains, from the sea as from the land; and further, as contiguous columns of air, as well as horizontal strata, may be of different densities, it is easy to conceive why the mirage may be seen in very different situations, as also why it presents such varied appearances. It will also be evident that any cause which re-establishes the equilibrium of density in the different portions of the air must cause the illusions of the mirage to vanish.

"Supposing the nature of refraction to be understood, the explanation of the way in which difference of density in different strata of the air occasions the mirage becomes very simple.

* 'Penny Cyclopædia,' art. 'Mirage.'



"Let A represent an object on a hill; *a b c d* a stratum of air heated by the reverberation from the soil beneath, so as to have a less density than that of the air above. Now, if an observer's eye be at E, he will see the object by direct vision in its proper place, and also a reversed image of the same just below it at B, because the rays coming from it obliquely towards the ground are refracted from their direct course on entering the less dense inferior stratum of air, and, taking at first a direction inclining to the horizontal, are afterwards bent up so as to meet the eye of the observer at E, who thus sees the indirect image in the direction B, or exactly as it would appear if reflected; and moreover, as the rays from that part of the heavens which form the background to the object are refracted in the same manner, the sky is reversed as well as the object, and presents the appearance of a sheet of water.

"If the lower stratum of air be denser than the strata above, and the object be seen by direct vision through the denser stratum, then the curve or trajectory, instead of being convex towards the earth, will be concave, and the reversed image will be seen as if suspended in the air above."

How the appearance of water may be produced; how actual objects may exhibit a reversed image in this apparent water; and how distant objects may be elevated and brought near by such refraction, is thus capable of most satisfactory explanation. But there still appear to be some points which, in all the accounts we have ever met with, we have never found explained to our full satisfaction. For example, an apparent lake, *surrounded by all the objects which a lake in such a climate might be expected to exhibit*, may be seen in situations known to be at least 200 miles distant from any place where a real lake can be found.* Is this the image of a real lake, brought near by refraction? Or is it purely an optical fantasy, produced in the manner which has been described? Considering that the point of view is low, and that the lake, if it exists, must be positively and comparatively lower, and taking into account the curvature of the earth in a distance of 200 miles, the first supposition gives a refractive power to the atmosphere infinitely greater than any accredited examples of apparent approximation, by even "unusual refraction," would require us to believe. The extent of the required power may be estimated by the fact that the curvature of the earth would alone exclude from view, at the distance of 200 miles, a mountain more than 20,000 feet high. Then as to the other alternative, although the appearance of water may be produced by optical illusion, whence come the trees and verdure by which the lake often seems to be surrounded in deserts absolutely destitute of all vegetation? The appearance of a body of water, and of water only, being produced in the manner described,—is it not possible that, in a region where water is always known to give birth to vegetation, the imagination supplies in these cases the customary association? Or, in other words, that the appearance of water is a *physical*, and that of trees and verdure a *mental* illusion. That all the members of a caravan see it does not render this unlikely;—they all see the *physical* illusion of water, but we have no evidence that they all think they see surrounding trees and other objects, and still less that they see the *same* objects in the *same* spots with their companions. But great *similarity* of excitement among many men would be not only accountable but natural; for a greater marvel than the mirage itself is offered in the psychological phenomenon of the similar influence upon many minds of a continued subjection to the same atmospherical modifications, the same scenery, the same diet and manner of life, and, above all, the same privations and desires.

We are content to state this as an alternative to those whom the other explanations leave unsatisfied. The corroboratory considerations, for which we cannot afford room, will probably occur to the minds of most of our readers.

* Wellsted's 'Travels in Arabia,' ii. 31.

CHAPTER V.—LAKES AND RIVERS.

If we sail along the coast of Syria and Palestine, we cannot fail to notice the mountain ranges which extend through the entire length of the land. We shall observe that they run parallel to the shore at various distances, but nowhere at any considerable distance from it. We shall then consider, that the streams which water the country before us arise from springs in those mountains; and, seeing that the course that they have to run must needs be short, and consequently that no time is afforded them to collect such tribute in their way as might give them importance, we shall infer that no stream deserving to be called a river can reach the sea. And when we further take into account the warmth of the low-lying country, and the want of rains in summer, we shall consider it very likely that there are few if any streams which continue to flow all the year, or which, in fact, are other than winter torrents. As the other, or inland, side of the water-shed which these mountains form is unknown to us, and as it is reasonable to suppose that all its waters are thrown in an *opposite* direction—that is inland, or eastward—we shall not calculate on any accidents which may bring round to the western coast, through openings in the mountains, any of the perhaps more considerable streams which have their rise in the farther side of the water-shed. All these conclusions from the natural organization of the country, as viewed from the coast, would prove to be correct. Nearly all the streams which flow from the western water-slope are mere torrents, rendered important during winter and spring by the rains and melted snows, but the course of which can only be discovered during the remainder of the year by the rounded stones and fragments of rock with which their beds are filled.

In all Palestine Proper not a single stream from a perennial source reaches the coast. It is only in the plains under the Lebanon mountains that such streams occur; and even there, such as maintain their existence throughout the year shrink to mere brooks during summer. Two of the only three streams in Syria that can strictly claim the name of rivers find their way to the western shore, although they rise on the eastern slopes: the third—the one that does not do this—is the JORDAN.

The particular information, as to the geographical construction of the country, which we have already given, in the chapter on mountains, will enable the reader to understand that, when the summit is attained of the frontier range of which we have been speaking, it is found that the waters of the eastern slope have a still shorter run than those of the western. Instead of stretching off afar into the eastern plains, the waters of this slope fall short into hollow basins—plains or valleys—which slope northward and southward, and collect and carry off the streams in channels running *parallel* to the mountains, in the form of the three most considerable rivers which the country offers. The channels of these three rivers traverse the entire length of Syria. The course of two of them—the Leontes and the Jordan—is to the south, and that of the Orontes is to the north. The opposite courses of the Orontes and Leontes demonstrate that the highest level in all Syria is at that part of the Lebanon chain which to this day bears the distinctive name of Jebel Libnan: for in the valley of Baalbec, or on the lower slopes of these mountains, are the springs in which those rivers rise;* and although the sources are not ten miles apart, they take opposite courses—the one to the north and the other to the south. The Orontes, impelled northward by the slope of the land in that direction, proceeds through the plains and valleys which are overlooked by the eastern slopes of the northern mountains, and owes all its relative importance to the fact that it has to traverse 150 miles before it can find an outlet to the Mediterranean. At last the chain of mountains terminates in Mount Casius, and then the river turns and hastens to the Mediterranean through the plain of Antioch. On the other hand, the Leontes, rising in the neighbourhood of Baalbec, hastens southward, and finds a much speedier access to the sea. It follows the course of the great Lebanon valley, keeping nearly in its centre, and passes through its opening termination towards the sea, which it reaches in the neighbourhood of Tyre, eighty-five miles from its source.

* It is true that both rivers originate in springs which rise both from Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, and which unite in the plain. Any of these may be considered the source; and, in fact the spring which is considered the source of the Orontes is on the Lebanon side, and that which is regarded as the source of the Leontes is on the Anti-Lebanon side near Baalbec. But the question of the highest water-level is not affected by the determination as to the particular springs which are to be regarded as the sources of these rivers.

The river Jordan rises nearly in the latitude in which the Leontes terminates. But this river never reaches any maritime shore;—after traversing two lakes, its course is cut short, and its waters lost in a third—the Dead Sea. Its basin drains the eastern water-slopes of Palestine Proper; but it drains them only of winter torrents, for all the country does not contribute one perennial stream to the Jordan. But it receives also the waters from the high eastern plains, and among these are the Jarmuch, the Jabbok, and the Arnon,—all of which, though their waters get very low, and almost extinct, towards the end of summer, are perennial streams.

Of these three rivers the Leontes is the least important; and although in length of course the Orontes much exceeds the Jordan, its volume of water is so inconsiderable, that were it not impeded by successive obstructions, it would be quite dry during the summer.* The Jordan is, therefore, entitled to take its place as the chief of Syrian rivers; and perhaps this is distinction enough for it: but besides this, it may be said that for a line of nearly 3000 miles along the coast of Africa and of Syria, no one stream, except the Nile, contributes as large a volume of water to the Mediterranean as the Jordan contributes to the Dead Sea, and that all Arabia has not one river comparable to it. Such comparisons as this, among similar things, are more just to the Jordan than those which it was some years ago fashionable to make, to its disparagement, as compared with the great rivers of Europe. Yet there are many small rivers of Europe which, aggrandized by the Atlantic tides, appear of much importance, although, intrinsically, of little more consequence than the Jordan. But the dignity of the Jordan arises from other circumstances than the volume of its waters or the extent of its course.

Seeing that the lakes of Palestine are intimately connected with the Jordan, their waters being, in fact, contained in enlarged hollows of its basin, it seems best not, for the mere sake of classification, to separate them from this natural connection, but to trace the river from its source to its termination, describing the lakes we have to pass in our way.

When several springs contribute their waters to form a river, it is often not easy to say which of them is to be regarded as its source; and perhaps the usual practice of selecting some one of them to be regarded as the source of the river in preference to the others, is nothing more than a convenient inaccuracy. It would seem that the spring which is most remote, and whose stream receives and is aggrandized into a river by the others which rise below it, has the best claim to be regarded as the source. But this is seldom the case; various accidental circumstances having, in most instances, operated to give the distinction to some one of the less remote springs. So, with respect to the Jordan, the stream which issues from the cave at Panias has been usually considered the source of that river: but its claim to this distinction may well be disputed; for, although very copious, it is by no means the most distant of the fountains of the Jordan. This opinion is by no means recent. Josephus mentions it as having been currently regarded as the fountain of the Jordan; but that the stream which proceeds from the cave originated in it, began to be questioned in his time It was held that, in reality, the stream which came from the cave was carried thither after some secret manner [subterraneously? from the lake of Phiala, which lake, as he states, lay about fifteen

* So Volney, i. 287, note.

miles from Cæsarea Philippi,* not far on the right hand of the road as one journeys to Trachonitis. This lake had its name, Phiala, [vial or bowl], by a very appropriate allusion to its cup-like appearance, its circumference being as round as a wheel. The water of this lake continued always up to the edges without sinking or running over. That it supplied the stream which issued from the cave at Panias was discovered in the time of Philip the tetrarch, when some chaff which had been cast into the lake was brought by the stream out of the cave.

Little reliance can be placed on such an experiment as this; and the conclusion deduced from it has not been supported by later observations. Indeed, in the first place, there seems to have been some difficulty in finding the lake of which the historian speaks. Seetzen, Burckhardt, and Irby and Mangles differ on this question. The lake which the latter found on their route by a new track, from Damascus to Panias, is the most important in itself, and agrees best in its situation and character with the intimations which Josephus offers. They describe it as a very picturesque lake, apparently perfectly circular, of little more than a mile in circumference, surrounded on all sides by sloping hills, richly wooded. The singularity of this lake is, that it has no apparent supply or discharge, and its waters appeared perfectly still, though clear and limpid. A great many wild-fowl were swimming in it. Captain Mangles thinks, we doubt not justly, that this is the lake of Phiala: but observes, that the alleged communication with the stream of Panias is impossible, as in that case the discharge must pass under a rivulet which some regard as the true source of the Jordan. We readily give up the alleged communication; but we do not know that it is rendered impossible by the circumstance stated. As the object of the chapter is to describe the various bodies of water in Palestine, it may be well to mention those which Seetzen and Burckhardt have *mistaken* for the lake Phiala. The former places it two leagues to the east of Panias, and says that it now passes by the name of Birket el Ram. It is difficult to make anything of this: for while, on the one hand, the distance is too small for the lake of Irby and Mangles,† on the other, the lake which Burckhardt describes under the name of Birket el Ram is not east of Panias, nor two leagues from it, but upwards of twenty miles to the south-east, on the road to Jacob's Bridge.

Burckhardt informs us that what the Bedouins call the Birket el Ram, and the peasants Birket Abou Ermeil, is a reservoir of water, a few hundred paces to the south of the road, at the foot of Tel Abou Nedy, and is supplied by two springs which are never dry. One of these is in the bottom of a deep well in the midst of the Birket. Just by this reservoir are the ruins of an ancient town, about a quarter of an hour in circuit, of which nothing remains but large heaps of stones. Five minutes farther is another Birket, which is filled by rain-water only. The neighbourhood of these reservoirs is covered by a forest of short oak-trees. The rock of the mountain consists of sandstone and the basalt of the Haouran. Beyond these Birkets the road (towards Jacob's Bridge) begins to descend gently; and at a distance of about four miles from them, just by the road, on the left, is a large pond, called Birket Nefah or Tefah, about 200 paces in circumference. Some of Burckhardt's companions asserted that the pond contained a spring, but some denied it; and from this he inferred that the water never dries up completely. "I take this," he adds, "to be the lake Phiala, laid down in the maps of Syria, as there is no other lake or pond in the neighbourhood." He was evidently not aware of the lake which Mangles describes, or he would, doubtless, have admitted its superior claims to that which he indicates. Indeed, none of these Birkets are at all in the situation indicated by Josephus, being about twenty miles to the S.E. and S.S.E. of the cave at Panias.

To that cave we now return. It is on the north-east side of the village of Panias. Over the source is a perpendicular rock, in which several niches have been cut to receive statues. The largest of these niches is above a spacious cavern, and is six feet broad and as much in depth, with a smaller niche at the bottom of it. Immediately above it, on the perpendicular face of the rock, is another niche, adorned with pilasters, supporting a shell ornament. Here are two other niches, near these, and twenty paces farther two more, nearly buried in the ground, at the foot of the rock. In the middle niche of the three represented in the engraving, the base of the statue which it once contained is still visible. Each of these niches has an inscription annexed to it; but Burckhardt could only decipher part of one of them. The niche in the cavern probably contained a statue of Pan, from whose worship the place acquired the name of Panias, and the whole mountain that of Panium; and in the other niches were probably other statues with suitable dedicatory inscriptions. There are a number of hewn stones about the source of the copious stream which here rises, and which may, perhaps, as Colonel Leake conjectures, have belonged to the temple of Augustus built here by Herod. The stream flows on the north of the village of Panias, where there is a well-built bridge and some remains of the ancient town. This stream is called by Burckhardt "the river of Panias," as he doubted its claim to be considered the source of the Jordan.

This traveller and some others would rather refer the source of this celebrated river to the spring which rises between three and four miles to the north-east of Panias. It is in the plain near a hill called Tel-el-Kadi. Here there are two springs near each other, one smaller than the other, whose waters unite immediately below. Both sources are on a level ground, among rocks of tufwacke. The larger source immediately forms a river twelve or fourteen yards across, which rushes rapidly over a stony bed into a lower plain. There are no ruins of any kind near the springs; but the hill over them seems to have been built upon, though nothing now is visible.

There is another stream, only noticed by Irby and Mangles, which, as being more remote, has a better claim, geographically, than either of the above, to be regarded as the source of the Jordan. It appears to rise from the southern slopes of Mount Hermon, at the distance of about twelve miles due east of the source at Panias. It was first noticed by Irby and Mangles, when they descended into a little plain, at the immediate foot of that mountain (Jebel-es-Sheikh, or Mount Hermon), not long before they came to the lake Phiala. The stream "runs along the western side of the plain in a southerly direction, when its course turns more to the westward, and rushing in a very picturesque manner through a deep chasm, covered by shrubs of various descriptions, it joins the Jordan at Panias." That it does unite with the other two streams to form the Jordan is unquestionable, from the direction of its course; but that the union takes place at Panias seems very doubtful: at all events, it were to be wished that this assertion had been made by the travellers when they were themselves at Panias, rather than here, where it looks much like a conjecture.

The fourth stream which requires to be noticed is that which rises at Hasbeya, and which has been slightly noticed in a preceding page (451). On geographical principles its claim to that distinction would not be disputed, as it is the most remote and considerable of the streams which form the river. It is twelve miles of direct distance to the north-east of the source of the Panias river; and the road to Panias from that quarter lies through the valley of this stream. Its source is a large spring that wells out from the west side of Jebel-es-Sheikh, near the village of Hasbeya, from which it takes the name of Moiet Hasbeya, or river of Hasbeya. There is a bridge over it at the village, and its banks are covered with numerous plantations of the mulberry-tree. Its ultimate course has not been well traced. Buckingham, who kept it in view almost from its source to a point about three miles *west* of Panias, says that it is there as broad, as deep, and as rapid as the Jordan near Jericho. It is said to take its further course to the lake Huleh without joining any of the streams which have been described, or the single stream formed by their junction. This, if true, would explain how it happens that this stream was not regarded as the source of the Jordan. But even in case it does independently pursue its course to the lake, it might still be regarded as the source, if the name of Jordan be confined to the single stream which *issues from* the lake, leaving to those which enter it their separate denominations.

Seetzen, who was not acquainted with the stream described by Irby and Mangles, thus states the relative claims of the other three:—"The ancients give the name of the source of the Jordan to the spring from which the Panias rises, and its beauty might entitle it to that name. But in fact it appears that the preference

* In its origin this town was probably the Laish, or Leshem, which the Danites took from the Canaanites and called Dan. Heathen writers called it Panias. Philip, the youngest son of Herod the Great, having enlarged and improved it, and made it the capital of his tetrarchy, gave it the name of Cæsarea, to which his own name was added, to distinguish it from the more important city of the same name on the coast. The name of Panias is that which is still preserved in the form of Banias. The visit of Jesus Christ to this place is recorded in Mark viii.

† By a singular oversight, Irby and Mangles fancy that their lake is that described by Seetzen and Burckhardt under the name of Birket el Ram, observing,—"It appears that this lake has only been remarked by Burckhardt and Seetzen; those who have gone from Damascus to Panias having taken the route by Rachia and Hasbeya." But this *was* the route of Seetzen; and Burckhardt notices the Birket el Ram while travelling the *lower* route from Damascus to Jacob's Bridge. His Birket is full fifteen miles to the south of their lake; and he takes no notice of *any* lake or Birket when travelling, on another occasion, on a route party parallel to theirs.

is due to the spring of the river Hasberia (so he calls it), which rises half a league to the west of Hasbeya, and which forms the longest branch of the Jordan. The spring of Tel-el-Kadi, *which the natives take for the source of the Jordan*, is that which least merits the name."

After this statement, and before proceeding to what may be called the *history* of the question, it is well to see the connection of these three streams as far as it has been *ascertained*. Mr. Buckingham's route from Panias was favourable to comparative observation, as it enabled him to take them all in succession, on nearly the same parallel, from east to west. His information is thus conveyed :—

"We quitted Panias, and, going west for a little more than a mile, came to a small elevation in the plain, with a flat space on the top, like an artificial mound. It is called Tel-el-Kadi. Here the springs of the Jordan (?) rise, rushing out of five or six places, rendered difficult of access by rushes, trees, &c. These springs are called by the Arabs Nubb-el-Etheari. They form, even here, a pretty large basin, and go, in a single stream, to the southward, passing by a place where there is a white tomb called Seedy Yooda Ibn Yacoob, and keeping near the foot of the eastern range of hills. This tomb is, perhaps, a mile to the south of the springs here described; and two miles to the southward of that, the water of Panias, which keeps always east of the Jordan [the stream from Tel-el-Kadi] thus far, here joins it, and they go together into the Bahr-el-Huleh, which is said to be six hours, though it looks not more than ten miles from hence.

"We went up in a north-west direction from hence, and *in an hour* crossed the river Hheuzbháni * over a bridge of three arches, the stream being here both wide and deep, with steep rocky banks on each side. *The river goes from hence southerly into a small lake called Birket Jehouly, about five miles to the south of this; and from thence it continues to the Bahr el Houley,—a much larger lake,—not mixing its waters with those of the Jordan till then.*"

This passage is conclusive for the fact, that the Hasbeya river is a large and important stream at a point between three and four miles to the north-west of Banias, and between two and three from Tel-el-Kadi. The concluding passage, which we have marked by italics, is, in terms, no less conclusive for the point that this stream does not join, or rather, does not receive, the others till it reaches the lake Houle. It is on this authority that the course of the Hasbeya has been represented in our own and some other maps of recent date; but rather because it is the *only* positive information which has been offered on the subject than that it is entitled to implicit reliance. It is to be regretted that the traveller does not state more distinctly the source of his information. He did not himself journey to the south of the bridge; and he does not say distinctly that his statement is founded on a survey from a commanding position. Such a survey over all the country to the lake Huleh may, from more than one point, be obtained; and when he acquaints us that the lake *looked* not more than ten miles distant from Tel-el-Kadi, we are left to infer that his information concerning the course of the Hasbeya was so obtained. As it is, we consider this question remains to be settled positively.

In favour of the conclusion that this river does reach the lake Huleh alone, is the fact, that some of the old Biblical geographers do make a tolerably broad river enter the lake Huleh to the west of the Jordan; but, then, their doing so is founded on what Reland seems to prove an erroneous interpretation of Josephus, and accordingly, he rejects this stream from his map. D'Anville, however, restored it, and carried its source far off to the hills in the north-*west;* and in this shape it has been preserved, even to our own time. Unless we suppose that this was founded on some information that a river actually did enter the Huleh at this point, not much of confirmation for the independence of the Hasbeya is obtainable from this circumstance.

Against it is the fact, that no travellers who have been at the head of the lake Huleh speak of any considerable stream, but the single one of the Jordan, as entering there. Pococke, Richardson, and Irby and Mangles, say not a word of any such stream. The information which the latter offer is most to the purpose, although somewhat negative. Departing from Panias, and "having been directed to follow the course of the Jordan, we endeavoured to perform that route. The beautiful wooded country does not continue more than two miles from Panias, when we entered into open, but rich plains. We found the ground very marshy; and, after winding about to find fords among the innumerable streams that water the plains, we crossed the Jordan itself. But the country on the other side was as full of marshes and ravines as that we had left, and in several places we nearly lost our horses. At length we succeeded in finding the road that leads to Safed, which runs at the foot of the hills on the other side of the plain."

* This is certainly the same that Seetsen calls Hasberia, and Burckhardt Hasbeya.

They travelled in early spring—the watery season; and this extract will serve to remind the reader of the description of this plain which we gave in the preceding chapter. They crossed the Jordan between two and three miles above the lake; and, after that, they make no mention of crossing any other river, although, unless the Hasbeya had previously joined the Jordan, its stream *must* have been crossed by them after they had passed that river; and the passage, in the season of overflow, of a river which, ten miles above the lake, appears as considerable as the Jordan near Jericho, could hardly fail to have been noticed. Yet the only answer to this which occurs to us is, that, at a time of the year when so many powerful torrents, which they found difficult to ford, rushed towards the lake, the river might have been passed without being distinguished from them; and this is rendered the more *possible* by their not expecting to find such a river, as they appear to have entertained the opinion that the Hasbeya was one of the streams that joined the Jordan before entering the lake Huleh.

On the other hand, Buckingham's visit was at a more advanced season of the year, when the marshiness of the country and the strength of the winter torrents must have subsided, and many of the latter had dried up; and when, therefore, it was more easy to distinguish the course of such a river. So, upon the whole, there seems a doubt in the matter which it must be left for future observations to solve.

After this statement as to the physical state of the question, the reader will be the better able to apprehend the questions connected with this matter which have been elaborately discussed by the various writers on Biblical geography.

Although Josephus speaks of the stream from Panias as the visible source of the Jordan, he yet mentions a Little Jordan and a Great Jordan. In one place he tells us that the marshes of the lake Samochonitis (Huleh) extend as far as the place Daphne, which in other respects is a delicious place, and has fountains, which supply water to what is called *Little Jordan*, under the temple of the golden calf, whence it is sent into the *Greater Jordan*. The meaning of this was considered to be helped out by the statement of Jerome, who says that the Jordan has its roots in Lebanon, and springs from two fountains, the one called *Jor* and the other *Dan*, and that the names join in the confluent stream (¹)

This statement has been repeated by various ancient and modern writers. Some of them were actual travellers; but whether they speak after Jerome, or on their own information, it is not possible to find. The only one who professes to acquaint us with the distance of the two fountains is Philostorgius, a writer of the fifth century, who makes it 160 stades, a distance much greater even than that between Panias and the sources of the Hasbeya, but agreeing, even by remote approximation, only with these two, and showing that the distance was, at any rate, deemed to be greater than the mile which separates the sources of the streams of Panias and Tel-el-Kadi.

On this information (excepting that as to distance) the old maps of Ziegler, Solinus, Adrichomius, Quaresmius, Fuller, and others, deduced one stream from some arbitrary point, and called it *Jor*, and another from the source at Panias, to which they gave the name of *Dan*. They made the distances, generally, too small for that between the sources of Panias and Hasbeya, and too great for that between Panias and Tel-el-Kadi.* When these streams are made to unite, the name Jordan is given to the enlarged river formed by their confluence. In all cases they consider that the "Little Jordan" was that *not* coming from Panias.

Lightfoot objected to this state of the question, with which he does not, however, indicate much acquaintance; as he assures that the theory of two originating streams arose from Josephus's mention of a great Jordan and a little Jordan, and are intended to represent them. He proves, at large, that both Josephus and the Talmudists place the spring of the Jordan at Panias, *and name no other;* and that this Panias was at the springs of the "Lesser Jordan;" or, in other words, that, while Josephus distinctly traces the Jordan to the source at Panias, he as distinctly assigns that, and no other, as the source of the "Lesser Jordan," without giving to the Great Jordan any separate source. Thus, he alleges there is no authority in Josephus for two distinct sources of the Jordan,

* Fuller is an exception. He makes the distance just enough for that between the sources of Panias and Hasbeya; and instead of calling the first Dan and the other Jor, as usual, reverses this order. In all the maps the second source is made to be *east* of that at Panias.

and seems unacquainted with the authority on which they were exhibited. He might well, therefore, express his amazement that the fountain of the Lesser Jordan should be known, and that of the supposed Greater unknown. He, therefore, concludes,—"We think, therefore, that Jordan is called the Greater and the Less, not upon account of two fountains, different and distinct from one another, but upon account of the distinct greatness of the same river. Jordan, rising out of Panias, was called Little until it flowed into the lake Samochonitis; but afterwards coming out of that lake, when it had obtained a great increase from that lake, it was thenceforth called Jordan the Greater. Samochonitis received Little Jordan and sent forth the Great. For since both that lake and the country adjacent was very fenny, the lake was not so much increased by Jordan flowing into it, as it increased Jordan flowing out of it." Therefore he represents the Jordan as a single stream, issuing from Panias, and called the Little Jordan from its source to the lake, and not till it leaves the lake acquiring the name of the Great Jordan. This view of the question received more authority and importance from its subsequent adoption by Reland.

The greatly enlarged information which we now possess enables us to see a little more clearly into the matter than these old theoretical geographers.

It seems to be proved that Josephus means the river of Panias by the Little Jordan, and that he describes it as running into another river called the Great Jordan, not as forming the Great Jordan by its junction with another river; and, if the Great Jordan were not formed till the river leaves the lake, he would surely have described the Little Jordan as running into the lake, rather than as flowing into the Great Jordan.* His account, therefore, may be taken to concur in assigning two distinct sources to the Jordan; and seeing that one of these sources is that which issues from the cave at Panias, the other only remains to be sought.

If the river of Hasbeya does *not* pursue its course alone to the lake, but receives the stream of Panias in its way, the fact could not be unknown to Josephus, and we might deem this to be the Great Jordan into which the lesser runs. But if the claim of this river be regarded as doubtful, for the reasons which we have stated, then the river noticed by Irby and Mangles would seem to take the next place; and the distance given by Philostorgius would appear to point to one of these rather than to any nearer source; and his statement seems the more entitled to attention, as he was nearer in time to Jerome than any other writer who mentions the subject. We have, however, satisfied ourselves that later travellers, commencing two or three centuries after Philostorgius, considered the Jor and Dan as represented by the proximate streams of Panias and Tel-el-Kadi. It is true they do not name the latter, or state the exact distance; but their indications of proximity are too distinct to be mistaken.† It might be well, however, to recollect that the Holy Land had, in the interval, fallen into the hands of the Arabians, in consequence of which the actual knowledge of the country had declined among European Christians, pilgrimages having become more rare, and travelling difficult and dangerous. It is easy, therefore, to conceive that the few who penetrated so far as Panias easily satisfied themselves that the two proximate streams were the two sources of the Jordan, the Jor and the Dan, of which they had read. It was so natural for them to conclude so, that it is likely they did it; and, therefore, their conclusions are no evidence of more ancient opinions on the subject.

Burckhardt informs us that the stream from Tel-el-Kadi still bears the name of Dan, or (as he spells it) Dhan; and a little further on he adds, "I was told that the ancient name of the river of Banias was Jor (Djour), which added to the name of Dhan made Jourdan: the more correct etymology is probably Or Dan. Lower down, between the Huleh and the lake of Tabaria, it is called Ordan by the inhabitants: to the southward of the lake of Tabaria it bears the name of Sherya, till it falls into the Dead Sea."

The question to which we have given this rather large portion of our attention is not of much geographical importance: but its critical and historical interest is considerable; and the reader is so liable to be perplexed by the remarkable differences which maps and books exhibit, that this attempt to elucidate the whole question will, perhaps, be regarded as a useful service. It has also been our desire to make travellers acquainted with the points on which information is still wanted.

* The following are the passages of Josephus which bear more or less on the question:—'Antiq.,' lib. v. cap. 2; viii. 8; xv. 13; xviii. 3; 'De Bello,' lib. i. cap. 16; iii. 15 and 35; iv 1.

† Compare Willibald (A.D. 765), 'Hodœporicon, et Vita,' in Canasius, tom. ii. 111, 119; Arculphus in Adamn. Scotus, 'de Locis Sancta,' l. ii. c. 16; Brocard (A.D. 1230) in Canasius, iv. 13; Baldensel (A.D. 1336) in idem, 352. Willibald, the earliest of these, is very clear on this point.

The description given in the last chapter, and the incidental notices in the preceding paragraphs, will give some notion of the enclosed land—the head of the Jordan valley—which is so abundantly watered by the perennial streams which we have described, and by the innumerable torrents which rush down in every direction from the surrounding hills from the middle of autumn to the end of spring. From these accounts we may understand the glowing terms in which it was described by the Danites from the thirsty south:—"We have seen the land, and behold it is very good—a large land—a place where there is no want of any thing that is in the earth."*

Before quitting it entirely, it may be well to state the leading geographical incidents of the northern portion of the valley which encloses the upper portion of the Jordan and two of its lakes.

This valley, commencing at the roots of Anti-Libanus—or rather of that portion of it which bears the name of Jebel-es-Sheikh—takes the name of Wady Sezebān, or Stezebān, and Buckingham says that it continues all the way to be so called,† even to the Dead Sea, although the part south of the lake of Tiberias is more frequently called El Ghor. He further states,—"The name of Jebel el-Wast, which is applied to the Anti-Libanus of the ancients, extends even to the southward of the Jebel-es-Sheikh as far as Panias. From thence, southerly, to the eastern shore of the lake of Tiberias is an even range of hills, called Jebel Jowalān, which, with the portion of Jebel-el-Wast from Hibl thus far, forms *the eastern boundary* of Wady Stezebān. *The western boundary*, which, is also a range of hills of no considerable height or marked form, is called Jebel Jowaleen. The valley itself extends, perhaps, thirty miles from its commencement at Hibl to its interruption at the north end of the lake of Tiberias, where the water occupies all the breadth of the plain. To the northward of the Bahr-el-Huleh it varies in breadth from five to ten miles, and to the southward of Panias it seems well cultivated throughout."‡

It should be observed, that the distance from the head of the valley to the head of the lake Huleh varies considerably with the time of the year, as the dimensions of the lake are greatly contracted during summer. And although the spring of Panias rises from among the mountains which form the head of the valley, it is not at the head of the valley from which Buckingham computes. The proper head of the valley is about five miles to the north of Panias. The distance from the head of the valley to the lake is about fifteen miles; but only ten from Panias.

The BAHR-EL-HULEH is called, in the Old Testament, "THE WATERS OF MEROM,"§ and is celebrated chiefly from the defeat of the confederate kings of Canaan by Joshua on its borders. It is not mentioned in the New Testament. Josephus calls it the LAKE SAMOCHONITIS, which appears to be a Greek rendering of the native name Samaco, which it bears in the Jerusalem Talmud. But in the same Talmud it is sometimes called "the Sea of Cobebo," while the Babylonian Talmud names it "the Sibbechean Sea."

The dimensions of this lake are variously stated, probably in consequence of its different appearance at different times of the year. In the season of flood it seems almost to rival the lake of Tiberias in extent; while, by the latter end of summer, it has shrunk to about half its former dimensions. Josephus seems to make it seven miles long by half that breadth: (*) Pococke seems to allow this length, but says it cannot be more than two miles broad, except at the northern extremity: Mariti makes it six (Italian?) miles long by four broad: Roger reduces it to one league long by a less breadth; while the latest observer, Dr. Robinson, describes it as eight or ten miles long by four or five miles broad, but adds, that the northern *half* is a mere marsh covered with tall reeds or flags. This observation was, it appears, made in June. At a more advanced season of the year, this mere marsh, to which the northern part of the lake is reduced in June, becomes quite dry, bringing down the dimensions to about the lowest estimate. On the other hand, the lake is not at the highest in June, but is then on the decline. Earlier in the year, the marshy northern portion is deep water, and of greater extent. But by the time the northern half is dried up, the southern portion itself becomes little more than a marsh. The contraction is more in length than in breadth; and by casting up the above estimates, it will appear that Josephus gave nearly the average dimensions.

The lake does not occupy the centre of the valley. It is much nearer to the eastern than to the western side. There is a space

* Judges xviii. 9, 10.

† This is not at variance with the statement already cited from Burckhardt; for what he gives are the names of the subdivisions of the *river*; whereas *this* applies to the *valley* through which the river flows.

‡ Not "throughout," but to a very considerable extent.

§ Joshua xi. 5.

of about five miles between its border and the western hills; but the distance from its opposite border to the eastern hills is much less considerable.

In the marshes which surround this lake, or rather in the marshy parts of the lake, the reeds with which the Orientals write grow abundantly, as well as other reeds with which arrows and lances are made. The outer border is surrounded by shrubs and trees—many of them fruit-trees—which in the distance present the aspect of a forest. This is a resort of various wild animals when driven from the mountains by the snows of winter, or from the plains by the heat and drought of summer; but few of them make it their constant abode. Water-fowl are also most abundant about the lake, particularly on the marshes to the north.

The banks of the lake are very low; but the lake itself is on a considerably higher level than the Lake of Tiberias. It is inhabited only on the eastern borders; and even there, if we rightly understand Burckhardt, there are only two villages, called Es-Seira and El-Deir. The south-west shore bears the name of Melaba, from the ground being covered with a saline crust. The lake abounds in fish, and its fisheries were, in the time of the last-named traveller, rented of the Mutsellim of Szaffad by some fishermen of that town.

Pococke informs us, that "the waters are muddy, and esteemed unwholesome, having something of the nature of the water of a morass. This is partly caused by their stopping the brooks on the west side, in order to water the country, so that the water passes through the earth into this lake: it is also, in some measure, owing to the muddiness of its bed. After the snows are melted and the water fallen, it is only a marsh, through which the river Jordan runs. The waters, by passing the rocky bed towards the Sea of Tiberias, settle, purify, and become fit for use."

The distance between the lakes Huleh and Tabaria is estimated by Pococke at ten miles, which agrees nearly enough with most other statements. In consequence of the higher level of the lake Huleh, and the narrow and rocky character of its channel, the Jordan flows down to the Lake of Tabaria with considerable rapidity and noise; but in the two first and two last miles its course is more quiet than in the intermediate distance. In this part of its course the stream is almost hid by the shady trees which grow on each side and make the prospect most delightful. The trees are chiefly of the plane family.

Pococke travelled along the western border of the river and the lakes, from the town of Tabaria to the head of the Lake Huleh. Dr. Richardson followed part of the same track, but turned off to the N.N.W. before he reached the southern extremity of that lake. The following, therefore, applies to most of that part of the river which lies between the two lakes. "The river is bounded by a chain of mountains [hills] on each side. On the east they rise up almost precipitously from the bed of the river. On the west there is a fine fertile vale, averaging about half or three-quarters of a mile broad, between the river and the mountain. The mountains on the east are bolder, and continue with little interruption all the way. On the west side, along which we travelled, the interruptions are frequent, and charming defiles, irrigated by small streams of water, pass off." After some time they came to a point where "the river passed through a small lake, which at first sight appeared to us to be a continuation of the Lake Gennesareth; but when we obtained a view of it from higher ground, we were satisfied that it was not." From the description, this lake seems to have been about midway between Jacob's Bridge and the Bahr-el-Huleh. We have felt much difficulty about this lake. There can be no doubt that Dr. Richardson saw it: but it is not mentioned by any other travellers, not even by those who have been in situations to overlook the whole course of the river between the lakes of Huleh and Tabaria; and Dr. Robinson, who in his journey particularly watched the statements of Richardson, distinctly affirms that between the two lakes "the Jordan flows in a narrow valley, and *forms no intervening lake*." This, we doubt not, is intentionally levelled at Dr. Richardson's statement. The only explanation which can remove this difficulty is to suppose, that the expanse of water which this traveller tells us he saw was merely a temporary exhibition in the season of overflow, at which time his visit took place, and which disappears when the waters fall; but in the present state of the question, it seems better to wait for further information than to form any decided opinion.

Leaving this question, it only remains to state, that the Jordan ultimately advances to the Lake of Gennesareth in a widened but still rapid stream among the nebbek-trees and thick groves of oleanders to which it gives life.

THE LAKE OF TIBERIAS is, from its associations the most interesting body of water in the Holy Land—far more so than the Dead Sea, although the latter is considerably larger, and is, physically, much more remarkable. Neither of these lakes is mentioned or alluded to in the Old Testament as often as might be expected. In the New Testament the Dead Sea is not once mentioned; but the name of the Lake of Tiberias very often occurs, as the town of Capernaum, on its border, was the usual residence of Christ, and the lake, or its shores, the scene of some of the most remarkable transactions of his life.

It was usual for the Jews to call every natural expanse of water *a sea*, which name was even applied, partly by metaphor, doubtless, to the brazen reservoir—"the brazen sea"—which stood in the court of the Temple. Accordingly, the evangelists Matthew, Mark, and John, being native Jews, invariably call the Lake of Tiberias a "sea;" but Luke, who was a native of Asia Minor, and whose geographical terms are always more distinctive, calls it generally a "lake." The present inhabitants, like those of ancient times, still call their water *a sea*, and reckon it and the Dead Sea to the south of them to be the two largest known, except the great ocean.

It is mentioned by many names. The most ancient seems to have been that of "Sea of Chinnereth" (Num. xxxiv. 11; Josh. xiii. 27), or, in the plural form, Chinneroth (Josh. xi. 2; xii. 3). The Targumists, who sometimes accommodated the old names to those which existed in their time, use "the Sea of Genesar;" sometimes "of Genosor," or "of Ginosar." Josephus uses "Gennesar." The Talmudists employ the same names, but more usually call it "the Sea of Tabaria," which is exactly the name it now bears, being the Oriental form of *Tiberias*. The evangelists employ both the principal names, "the Lake of Gennesaret,"* "the Sea of Tiberias" (John xxi. 1), and, sometimes, "the Sea of Galilee" (John vi. 1), from the bordering province, on the west, to which the lake was considered to belong.

There was a city and district of the name of Chinnereth (Josh. xix. 35) on the borders of the lake from which it appears to have derived its name.† The name Chinnereth might easily pass into Gennesareth, which name, as applied to the lake, is expressly declared by Josephus to have been derived from an adjacent district, which district appears to have bordered on, if it did not include Tiberias. The Jewish writers tell us, that the district itself took this name from the delightful gardens and paradises which were there. Some make them royal gardens, deducing the name from גני סרים *geni sarim*: "so that," says Lightfoot, "by the Jews' etymology, the name was taken from some royal gardens that lay upon it; which may very well be, since Herod's palace was at Tiberias, and as from the royalty of that city the sea was called 'the Sea of Tiberias;' so, possibly, from the orchards and gardens upon it, it might be called 'Genesar,' or the place of princely gardens."

The dimensions of this lake have been differently stated by different authorities;‡ and this is much more remarkable in the present case than in that of the lake Huleh, as the Lake of Tiberias has its boundaries very distinctly marked by the mountains by which it is enclosed. These differences doubtless proceed from the different experience of travellers in measuring distances by the eye. As experienced mariners can make the best estimates by the eye of distances over water, Mr. Buckingham seems the traveller on whose opinion we should be most disposed to rely; and he says, "Its greatest length runs nearly north and south from twelve to fifteen miles, and its breadth seems to be in general from six to nine miles." Dr. Clarke's naval friends also computed *the breadth*, from Tabaria to the opposite shore, at six miles; of the *length* they made no estimate, as the whole extent of the lake is not visible from that place. The length given by Buckingham, and the breadth by Clarke, seem to afford the correct result, as Dr. Robinson estimates the length at eleven or twelve miles, by six broad in the widest part.

Viewing the whole extent of the lake from its southern extremity, Mr. Hardy compares its figure to that of a boy's kite, or of a bird flying, which last seems the better comparison of the two.

The Jewish writers enlarge in the most glowing terms on the excellences of this lake; and, considering their limited materials for

* Luke v. 1. The *et* or *eth*, if not borrowed from the old name, may be regarded as a Greek termination for euphony. So in Naza*reth*, of which the proper Hebrew name is *Nazar*.

† "Others conceive that it is so named from *Kinnor*, a harp in Hebrew, which it is said in shape to resemble; sure the high winds sometimes make but bad musick (to the ears of mariners) when playing thereupon."—FULLER.

‡ Josephus, 140 (some copies have 100) stades by 40; Pliny, 16 (Roman) miles by 6; Munster, 80 B. miles in compass; Bunting, 12 miles by more than 4; Roger, 6 leagues by from 2 to 3; Biddulph, 24 miles by 15; Sandys, 12 miles by 6; Hayes, 10 or 12 miles by 4; Mariti, 18 miles by 6; Clarke, 6 miles broad; Jowett, 20 miles by 12.

comparison, they had reason to do so. "Seven seas," says the Talmud, "have I created, saith God, and of them all have I chosen none but the Sea of Gennesareth."* Josephus dwells on the sweetness and softness of its water, of its pebbly bottom, and, above all, of the salubrity of the surrounding atmosphere. He affirms that the water was so cold in its nature, that its temperature was not affected by being exposed to the sun during the hottest season of the year. He also expatiates largely on the extraordinary fertility and valuable products of the land of Gennesareth, by which he evidently means the tract on the eastern borders of the lake.† All this praise of the water and so forth is allowed by modern travellers; and what is said of the peculiar fertility of its borders is true to an extent which a more fitting place will require us to notice.

Of all modern descriptions, perhaps that of Dr. Clarke is the best in conveying a general impression of the scene which is offered from the summit and descent of the western mountains. It is true that, like many other of this ardent traveller's pictures, it is highly coloured, and the shades skilfully softened; but what he omits is easily supplied from other sources. His point of view was very favourable;‡ and we observe that those who, like him, describe it as viewed from the hills, use much warmer language than those who picture it from the shore.

"A view was presented, which, for its grandeur, independently of the interest excited by the different objects contained in it, has nothing equal to it in the Holy Land.

"From this situation we perceived that the plain over which we had been so long riding [from the west] was itself very elevated. Far beneath appeared other plains, one lower than the other, in a regular gradation, reaching eastward, as far as the surface of the Sea of Tiberias. This immense lake, almost equal, in the grandeur of its appearance, to that of Geneva, spreads its waters over all the lower territory. Its eastern shores exhibit a sublime scene of mountains towards the north and south, and they *seem* to close in at either extremity: both towards Chorazin, where the Jordan enters, and the *Aulon*, or *Campus Magnus*, through which this river flows to the Dead Sea. The cultivated plains, reaching to its borders, which we beheld at an amazing depth below our view, resembled, by the different hues their various produce presented, the motley pattern of a vast carpet. To the north appeared many snowy summits towering beyond a series of intervening mountains. We considered them as the summits of Libanus; but the Arabs belonging to our caravan called the principal eminence Jebel-el-Sieh.§ The summit was so lofty that the snow entirely covered the upper part of it, investing all the higher part with that perfect white and smooth velvet-like appearance, which snow only exhibits when it is very deep."

Continuing his way over the plain, before reaching the edge of the steep declivity which conducts down to the shore, the same traveller writes:—"The lake continued in view to our left. The wind rendered its surface rough, and called to mind the situation of our Saviour's disciples, when, in one of the small vessels which traversed these waters, they were tossed in a storm, and saw Jesus, in the fourth watch of the night, walking to them upon the waves. Often as the subject has been painted, which combines a number of circumstances favourable to a sublime representation, no artist has been aware of the uncommon grandeur of the scenery memorable for the transaction. The Lake of Gennesareth is surrounded by objects well calculated to heighten the solemn impression made by such a picture; and, independently of the local feelings likely to be excited in its contemplation, it affords one of the most striking prospects in the Holy Land. It is by comparison alone that any due conception of its appearance can be communicated to the minds of those who have not seen it. Speaking of it comparatively, it may be described as longer and finer than any of our Cumberland and Westmoreland lakes, although it be, perhaps, inferior to Loch Lomond in Scotland. It does not possess the vastness of the Lake of Geneva, although it much resembles it in certain points of view. In picturesque beauty it perhaps comes nearest to the Lake of Locarno in Italy, although it be destitute of anything similar to the islands by which that majestic piece of water is adorned. It is inferior in magnitude, and, perhaps, in the height of the neighbouring mountains, to the Lake Asphaltitis; but its broad and extended surface, covering the bottom of a profound valley, surrounded by lofty and precipitous eminences, when added to the impression under which every Christian pilgrim approaches it, gives it a character of unparalleled dignity."

From lower points of view, on the descent to the lake, and from the plain by which the lake is bordered, much of all this grandeur is lost; and much that looks beautiful in the distance becomes bald and barren in the nearer view. That nearer view is still grand, especially from the plain at the northern extremity of the lake. On the east rise the mountains, not precipitously, but rolling back from the shore, green and verdant after rain, but destitute of trees. On the west, hill rises above hill in beautiful succession, and the loftiest visible summit was crowned with a city (Safed) whose commanding position was probably unequalled in the world.* In two places the mountains here come down to the lake; the rest is a beautiful and uncultivated plain—that rich and fertile "land of Gennesareth," which, for its combination of natural advantages—soil, scenery, climate, temperature—is, perhaps, exceeded by no other spot on earth. In winter and spring this plain is traversed by numerous torrents, some of which are so large and rapid as not to be passed without difficulty. "Nothing can surpass the beauty and grandeur of the surrounding scenery," says Elliot; and he had travelled widely.

The feathered tribes seem to make the lake a favourite resort. Multitudes of song-birds harbour in the northernmost groves, and their innumerable happy voices mingle with the rush of waters, where the river hastens to the lake. The margin and surface of the lake itself presents large flocks of storks, wild-ducks, and diving birds; pelicans are not wanting; while here and there vultures are assiduously engaged with their carrion prey; or eagles, heavily flapping their broad wings, rise to their aeries in the mountains. But when the heat of the summer sun—intensely concentrated on the borders of this deep basin—has absorbed all the moisture which the earth contained, and utterly dried up the green herbage which gave a cheerful aspect to the scene, the effect of the whole, in the entire absence of trees, is very different,—more dull, heavy, sad, but not less, perhaps, in unison with the general tone of feeling with which the Christian pilgrim is prepared to regard this memorable lake. Its surface is usually in a state of dead calm; and, in the universal stillness, the gentle plash of its water upon the pebbles of the shore is distinctly heard, and is, indeed, almost the only sound that strikes the ear. Not a single boat of any kind is seen upon the lake; and, now that the Arab has removed his tents to the higher country, the eye may wander around its borders in vain, seeking for any other signs of habitation than the mean town of Tabaria, and one or two miserable villages. The saddened traveller may gaze for hours over the scene without observing a single human being, or, indeed, any living creature, save the large water-fowl, whose sole presence tends rather to increase, than to diminish, the desolation of the view.

How different this view from that which was presented to the eye about the time of Christ! Then the borders of the lake were thickly populated, and the eye rested in turn upon fortresses and cities, towns and villages. There was not only the royal city of Tiberias, but the woe-doomed cities of Chorazin and Capernaum, both the frequent witnesses of His "mighty works,"—the latter his most usual place of residence,—"exalted unto heaven" once, but now so utterly "cast down" that men know not where it stood. There also was Bethsaida,—"the city of Andrew and Peter,"—Hippos and Gamala,† Tarichea and Beth-Meon, Emmaus and the strong Magdala; doubtless with many other places of less note, the names of which history has found no occasion to preserve. Then, also, the surface of the lake was enlivened with the numerous boats passing constantly across, and from town to town, with passengers and goods, while the fishers launched forth to cast their nets in the deep waters. Then the shores were everywhere richly planted and cultivated, and offered numerous delightful gardens and paradises, while numerous people, busy or unoccupied, were seen passing to and fro: and then, instead of this silence, were heard the voices of men calling to each other, the joyous shouts of happy children, the sound of the song and harp, the noise of the millstones, and the lowing of the herds upon the sides of the hills. Amidst the present

* But it is possible that, as Lightfoot conjectures, this was invented for the praise of the famous Jewish college at the town of Tiberias, contiguous to the lake.

† Joseph. de Bell. lib. iii. c. 10.

‡ In fact, no one has described the lake from the same point of view, which was the top of the (so-called) Mount of Beatitudes.

§ Jebel-es-Sheikh, or Hermon, concerning which see p. 422. The lower points of view, from which most travellers describe the lake, do not take in this magnificent background; hence, perhaps, the comparative tameness of their descriptions. Stephens rather sneers at the comparison to the Lake of Geneva, particularly on the score of the *absence* of a Mont Blanc; whereas, in fact, the very *presence* of Mount Hermon, capped with snow, in the distance, probably first suggested the comparison to Dr. Clarke. Clarke and Stephens described impressions from what they saw: the former *did* see the snowy Hermon; but the latter *could not* see the splendid background which that mountain forms.

* This city was destroyed by an earthquake, in 1837; see p. 444.

† A few of these names are collected from the Rabbins. We do not *know* that Gamala was visible; but the mountain, from the shape of which it took its name (which means *Camel*), and on which it stood, is one of those which bound the lake.

vacancy and silence, the mind can better fill out the details of such a picture, than were the scene actually occupied with other and different objects than those which the imagination wishes to supply.

As the waters of the lake lie in a deep basin, surrounded on all sides by lofty hills, except at the outlet and entrance of the Jordan, long-continued tempests from any quarter are unknown. This is also true, and for the same reasons, of the Dead Sea. But these same local features, which preclude any long agitation of its surface, render it liable to whirlwinds, squalls, and sudden gusts. But these, as in every similar basin, are of short duration, and the most furious squall is speedily followed by a calm. Winds from the south-east are those by which a boisterous sea is most usually raised in this lake.

It has been affirmed of this—as of other lakes which receive and discharge a river—that the Jordan makes its passage through it without mingling its waters.* We only know that its course through the middle of the lake is distinctly marked. There is a current throughout the breadth of the lake, even to the shore; and the passage of the Jordan through it is observable by the smooth state of the water's surface in that part.

It is, probably, on account of this current that the old Jewish doctors decided that "the sea of Tabaria is like the gliding waters." It was once a mighty question whether those waters were fit for use in which unclean fish swam about with the clean; and the conclusion was,—"Flowing and gliding waters are fit, those that do not glide are not fit; and the lake of Gennesareth is to be numbered with gliding waters." After the praise of its water, which has, in a former page, been adduced from Josephus, it may be well to add that it is perfectly clear and sweet, although it receives several hot saline springs, so impregnated with gases that they change the colour of the stones over which they pass. Dr. Clarke describes it as being clear as the purest crystal, sweet, cool,† and most refreshing to the taste. He swam to a considerable distance from the shore, and found it so limpid that he could discern the bottom covered with shining pebbles. Among these stones was a beautiful but diminutive kind of shell, being a nondescript species of *Buccinum*, to which he gave the name of *Buccinum Galilæum*. He and his friends amused themselves with diving for specimens; and the very circumstance of their being able to discover such small objects beneath the surface may prove the high transparency of the water. The lake generally presents a dark appearance, on account of the high mountains by which it is enclosed.

The fishing operations upon this lake, which were anciently of so much importance, and connected with which so many interesting circumstances are recorded in the New Testament, have altogether ceased. There is not, or was not very lately, a single boat upon the lake. There were none even in the time of D'Arvieux (1660). Hence the country derives no advantage from the immense quantity of very excellent fish which now, as formerly, the lake contains. A small supply is obtained by nets cast from the beach; but this process is necessarily so unproductive, that, even at Tiberias, fish bears the same price per pound as meat. Most travellers have, naturally, desired to eat fish at this place, but have not always succeeded. Hayes was prevented by the Lenten prejudices of his Greek host; ‡ Irby and Mangles almost lived on fish, and praised it highly. According to them, there are excellent fish, but the variety is small. Stephens, in his journey along the shore, observes, "I thought to enhance the interest of this day's journey by making my noon-day meal from the fish of the Lake of Gennesareth; and having on my way up seen a net drying on the shore, I aroused the sleeping Arabs, and they had promised to throw it in for me; but when I returned I found that, like Simon Peter and the sons of Zebedee, 'they had toiled all the day, and caught nothing.'" Elliot and his friend were more fortunate. They halted at the same place (near the presumed site of Bethsaida), and requested a man to throw his line and let them taste the produce of the lake. In a few minutes each of them was presented with a fish broiled on a plate of iron, according to the custom of the country,§ and wrapped in a large wafer-like cake, a foot in diameter, of which one was spread as a table-cloth and two others served for napkins. "Thus," observes the traveller, "we made a repast, on the banks of the Sea of Tiberias, of what was almost literally 'five loaves and two small fishes.'"

The Great Jordan, to which all general statements refer, may be said to be formed as soon as the river leaves the lake of Gennesareth. The valley through which it passes to the Dead Sea has already been fully described; and it has been stated that the proper bed is a lower valley, about three-quarters of a mile in breadth, covered with high trees and the most luxuriant herbage. In the winter the swollen river inundates the plain in the bottom of this lower valley, but never rises to the level of the upper plain of the Ghor, which is at least forty feet above the level of the river. The wild animals which harbour during summer amid the shade and freshness of the lower valley are then obliged to ascend to the upper plain, and seek some other refuge for the winter. This swelling of the river, and the retreat of the wild animals before it, are more than once alluded to by Jeremiah.*

The Jordan, even in this part of its course, is fordable in many places during summer; but the few spots in which it may be crossed during the rainy season are known only to the Arabs. On leaving the Lake of Tiberias it flows for about three hours near the western hills, and then turns towards the eastern, on which side it continues its course for several hours.

Dr. Richardson states that three streams issue from the lake, which soon unite to re-form the Jordan. This was in May; and the circumstance is not noticed by other travellers, who describe the issuing river as a single stream. The Jordan rushes from the lake with considerable force in a stream which is about fourteen yards across at the end of April. There are some remains of a bridge, a little below, but the stream is now crossed at this point in a crazy ferry-boat. It will be recollected that there were ferry-boats on the river in the reign of David.† We find no notice of its being in use later than April: so it seems probable that the river cannot here be forded in winter and early spring, when, of course, the river must even there have its volume of water greatly increased by the rise of the waters in the lake.

In May (15th) we find it said that at this place the stream "is *now* forded by the Arabs, who swim their animals across."‡ The Rev. P. Fisk, who was here in November (11th), and rode a little way down the bank, says,—"The river bends often, and varies much in width, perhaps from 30 to 100 yards. It is so shallow, that cattle and asses were fording it without difficulty." Mr. Buckingham states the stream to have been "barely fordable" at two or three miles below the lake, in the beginning of February, and that it had then and there a current of about two knots an hour.

The river appears to diminish its speed as it proceeds. One of the fords, practicable even in February, occurs about four miles below the lake. There, however, the water is so deep near the banks as to throw the horses off their legs and oblige them to swim; but they regain their footing as they approach the middle of the stream; and in the very centre it is found to be quite shallow.

About ten miles below the lake, there is a large stone bridge of one large and two small arches. The river has here a considerable depth of water, and is about forty feet wide. The water is of a white sulphureous colour, but without any unpleasant smell or taste, and it rolls over a very stony bed. A little above the bridge the stream is smoother and the bottom more practicable than in its immediate neighbourhood.

About ten miles below this bridge, and twenty below the lake, we come opposite the town of Bysan,§ which stands about two miles from the river to the west. In this neighbourhood there are two or three fords over the Jordan. Indeed the river is here so generally fordable, that, in ancient times, as now, it was much crossed in this direction. It is, however, not usually forded opposite the town, but about three miles lower down. Here it was crossed by Captain Mangles, who observes (March 12) that the stream is much more swift here than it is nearer to the lake of Tiberias. The depth at the ford reached above the bellies of the horses; and the *measured* breadth was found to be 145 feet. Burckhardt, who crossed above two miles lower down in the midst of summer, found the river eighty paces broad and about three feet deep.

We proceed southward from this point for as much as twenty-seven miles (direct distance), without finding any point where the

* "The river of Jordan runneth through the midst of this sea, and mingleth not therewith, but preserveth his own stream entire: which some impute to the swiftness, yea, rapidness, of his course, not at leisure to take notice of (much less to unite with) any water he meets in his way, before he comes to his journey's end at the Dead Sea."—FULLER.

† "In the water of the lake my thermometer stood at 70°, in the sun at 90°."—FISK. This was in November.

‡ The Greeks do not, like the Roman Catholics, indulge themselves with fish during their fast-days.

§ Luke xxiv. 42.

* "Thou land of peace, thou mayest have confidence; yet how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" xii. 5. "Behold as a lion cometh up, a strong one from the swelling of Jordan," xlix. 19; repeated in chap. l. 44.—Blayney's Translation.

† "There went over a ferry-boat to carry over the king's household, and to do what he thought good." 2 Sam. xix. 18.

‡ Maddox, ii. 251.

§ The Scriptural 'Bethshan,' and the classical 'Scythopolis.' To the walls of this town the Philistines fastened the body of Saul. 1 Sam. xxxi. 10.

river has been visited or crossed by any modern travellers; and this important central tract, with the country on either hand, may be pointed out to future travellers as a part of Palestine absolutely unvisited, and therefore undescribed, although it is a portion of the country in which some valuable discoveries relating to ancient sites might very probably be made.

We become acquainted with the Jordan again at a point about twenty miles to the north of the Dead Sea. It was here crossed by Captains Irby and Mangles at the latter end of March. Approaching the river from the east, they observe, "The plain, from the foot of the mountains, is about half way pretty level, but barren; thence it becomes rugged, consisting of a quantity of hills, vales and deep chasms, in a dry soil of very white appearance, and of a saltish nature: this continues to within a quarter of a mile of the river's bank; whence the rest is a rich flat plain to the margin of the river, which is in the bottom of a deep ravine, beautifully wooded, and so overgrown, that the stream is not seen till you are close to it." They found the river quite swollen, and it was not without much delay and difficulty, and some danger, that they were able to cross, and then only by swimming their horses.

Another place of passage, about four miles below this, has been fully described by Mr. Buckingham. The great vale of Jordan is here about ten miles across, from the eastern to the western mountains, while the lower valley in which the Jordan runs is, as far as observed from this point, about a mile wide in its widest parts and a furlong in the narrowest. Descending into this, the white chalky cliffs on either side appear to be about 200 feet high. The river flows through the midst of the lower vale, between banks which are fourteen or fifteen feet high; but this is when the stream (January) was at its lowest ebb; for there are indications that when swollen by rains it may overflow its banks sufficiently to inundate the lower plain, though it could never reach the upper one. The stream appeared, at this place and at this season, to be little more than twenty-five yards in breadth, and so shallow as to be easily forded by horses. The banks are thickly lined with tall rushes, oleanders, and a few willows. The stream is extremely rapid; the water tolerably clear, from its flowing over a bed of pebbles, and is pure and sweet to the taste. Mr. Buckingham inquires whether the Israelites did not cross the river at this point, but we think it must have been lower down.

The place where Christ received baptism from the hands of John the Baptist is that which has for ages engaged the interest of the Catholic and Oriental Christians; and which has been far more frequented than any other part of the river. Indeed the spot has, from the most remote times until now, been a place of annual pilgrimage, at Easter, to thousands of Christians from all parts of the world. The true site of this interesting event is, however, probably not known. The Catholics disagree with the Greek and Oriental Christians on this point. The latter place the site three or four miles further towards the Dead Sea than the former; and this is so far happy, as it prevents interference in their pilgrimages to and their ablutions in the sacred stream. The Catholics place the site about seven miles from the Dead Sea, the Greeks not more than four. Some confusion arises from the indistinct manner in which travellers speak of the place of pilgrimage, without stating which of the two places they mean. But this may be sometimes collected from circumstances. The old travellers invariably speak of the place which the Catholics have chosen; while those of more recent date more commonly have in view the point, lower down, which the Orientals prefer to consider as "the place where John was baptizing." To both parties, the places to which they respectively repair is of additional interest to them, from the belief that the place where Christ was baptized was that also where the Israelites crossed the river. And this is not unlikely; for John is said to have been baptizing at "Beth-abara beyond Jordan," and *Beth-abara* means "the house of passage," with a very possible reference to the passage of the Israelites at that place.

Both points are two of the most beautiful places on the river; and as there seems little difference in the appearance of the stream or its banks, we shall be content to notice that which is nearest the Asphaltic Lake, and which has been the most frequently visited and described. But it may enliven these details if we join the annual pilgrimage in its visit to this spot, taking that of 1837, which has been so well described by the Rev. C. B. Elliot.

The cavalcade consisted of about 3000 Greek and Oriental pilgrims from every part of the world where the eastern churches have members, together with muleteers, camel-drivers, Turkish and Arab soldiers, and half-a-dozen Frank travellers, who swelled the amount to 5000.

"On these occasions every beast in Judea is put in requisition; and horses, donkeys, mules, ponies, and camels, flocking from all quarters, throng Jerusalem for several days previous. The young and the aged are placed in panniers on either side of a camel: women who never before mounted a horse now cross themselves in an orthodox manner (for their safety depends on the exact mode of forming the cross!), and stride *manfully* the saddle: boys and girls are seen siding two and two, beguiling the length of the journey with an occasional dispute as to which shall sit on the pad, and which on the less comfortable back-bone of the beast, sharpened by a perpetual fast. Hundreds who cannot afford to ride, having already bestowed on the priests the earnings of many years, trudge on foot; at first briskly leading the way, then merged in the equestrian cavalcade, till at length they are worn out with fatigue, and their pilgrim staves bring up the rear. A singular variety of costume characterises the barbarous Russian, the sportive Athenian, the patriotic islander, the Greek priest, the austere Armenian, the poor Copt, and the dark skinned Syrian; while all these blend picturesquely with the uniform of the Turkish and Arab cavalry, who gallop their well-trained horses up and down among the motley crowd, now urging them to full speed, and now suddenly curbing them with rapidity that excites as much alarm as admiration."

We cannot afford to follow Mr. Elliot through all the details of the journey; although they are well worth perusal, as forming, altogether, the best description we possess of this pilgrimage. The caravan usually arrives towards evening in the neighbourhood of Riha, (the supposed) Jericho, and encamps near the stream which flows by, issuing from a spring, supposed to be the same which the prophet Elisha healed:—

"A little after midnight the pilgrims put themselves in motion, in order to reach by sunrise the banks of the sacred river; but it is no easy matter to start a caravan of 5000 persons, and it was three o'clock A.M. before the cavalcade was in progress. A number of torch-bearers preceded, carrying flambeaux, which threw a wild blaze of light over the plain and the moving host. The Arab cavalry marched next, their spirited horses curveting, while they plunged into the high grass and jungle, to drive out any lurking Bedouins; the governor, with the Greek archbishop, followed; and lastly the whole host of pilgrims, hurrying along with anxious expectation to wash in a stream which they vainly suppose to be endowed with a cleansing moral efficacy. In such a multitude, moving without order, subject to no discipline, and wrought up to an unnatural pitch of excitement by superstitious zeal, it is not surprising that many accidents occur. Some of the party are generally left dead, many are wounded, and all are kept in a state of feverish alarm for their personal safety. One thing struck us forcibly,—the entire absence of sympathy among these professors of piety. If an aged man, a feeble woman, or helpless child fell from his seat, no friendly hand was stretched out to aid, and no fellow-pilgrim halted to ascertain the extent of injury received. The groans and cries of the sufferer were responded to by a laugh, and the cavalcade moved on regardless of their brother, who, if he met with sympathy and aid, found it at the hand of some 'good Samaritan,' united to him by no ties of country or of faith.

"The sun arose above the mountains of Moab just as we reached the Jordan, after a ride of more than two hours over a tract utterly sterile, deserted even by the samphire and low shrubs which appear on other parts of the plain. Instantly a rush was made, and the pilgrims, young and old, rich and poor, sick and sound, men, women and children, plunged into the stream. Some of the females and children, however, evinced a degree of nervousness, and here and there the father of a family might be seen gently chiding his spouse, or more roughly handling his young ones; now religiously forcing the head of a little girl under the water, and now struggling with a well-grown urchin, whose fears had got the better of his love of pilgrimage. Of the men, some jumped boldly in, communicating a rotatory motion to the body as it passed through the air; a few considerately occupied themselves in aiding the weaker sex, rendering to a tottering mother or timid sister the support of filial or fraternal strength; others resigned themselves composedly to the priests, who, standing like the Baptist in the river, poured the sacred water three times on the head of the devotee. All were clad in their winding-sheets, or, to speak more correctly, all carried with them, either attached in some way to the body, or held loosely in the hand, the piece of cloth with which they wished to be enveloped after death, for to make certainty more sure, the *hajee*, who has preserved the taper once touched by the holy fire,* secures

* This alludes to the shocking imposition practised by the priests upon the people on Easter-day, in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, whereby they are made to believe that a light, kindled by some artificial means within the Sepulchre, and produced to their admiration and reverence, has been the result of a miracle.

likewise a winding-sheet dipped in Jordan, which possesses an equal charm, and is supposed to protect from the power of the devil both the corpse so shrouded and the spirit that shall reanimate it. Some of these promiscuous bathings are occasions of great indecorum, but, in the present instance, we saw no more than the *ghat* of every populous town on the Ganges exhibits daily. When, however, the scene is contemplated as a religious ceremony, and when the Turkish governor is observed, with his Moslem satellites, ridiculing with proud disdain these vain ablutions, and this violation of female modesty, the Protestant cannot but lament the errors of those who, like himself, profess the faith of Christ, and the consequent degradation of that sacred name in the eyes of infidels."

The bed or valley of the river, as distinguished from the plain, exhibits in this quarter a series of terraced depressions from the plains of Jericho to the stream. The first occurs about a mile and a half from the Jordan, where a descent of about eight feet is made. This descent is rather irregular, the edges of the strata much washed, and there are many irregular masses of earth along the edge, that have resisted the wastings which removed the strata to this extent. The whole surface of this part of the plain is very destitute of vegetation. At the distance of about three quarters of a mile there is another depression, nearly as considerable as the former, the edge of which has much the same washed and irregular appearance. The land, or vale, which is now entered, has many of those irregular mounds of earth which have been mentioned as lying along the water's edge of the former descent. The Rev. J. D. Paxton, who has given the best, or, indeed, the only description of these appearances, says:—"It looked as if the whole plain had once been on a level with the part above the first descent, and that a sweeping torrent, extending out to where the first bank is, had passed over it, and swept away about ten feet of earth, except a few hard spots near the edge; then, that another torrent had come down, reaching out only to the place where the second bank is, and within its range had carried off ten or twelve feet of earth, leaving a large number of spots that resisted its force; for the mounds between the first and second banks nearly agreed in height with the plain above that bank, while those below the second bank agreed in height with the land between the first and second banks." From this traveller's further account it appears, that in the space between the second and third banks, much of the ground looked as if it was often covered with water, like the dried mud on which water has long lain, thus evincing that the Jordan sometimes overflows its proper channel to this extent. This is not the general character of the district. There are in many places small bushes, and in some parts a considerable crop of weeds. There is a third descent, to what may be considered the immediate bank of the stream in its ordinary channel. It is about the same depth as the former; and on and near this last bank, down to the water's edge, there are numerous bushes and small trees of the kinds already noticed.

The terraced appearances here described are very common where rivers, subject to periodical overflows, traverse a plain, the soil of which may be easily disintegrated or undermined by the action of water. It certainly seems to us to prove that the Jordan, in its annual overflows, once reached to the upper water-mark. That it does not do so at this time may be owing to the stream (which is here very rapid) having worn itself a deeper channel than of old. These different banks, so distinctly marked, are probably of old origin, and if they existed when the Israelites crossed the river, we obtain a clearer and more intense meaning from the explanation that "the Jordan overfloweth *all its banks* at the time of harvest." (Josh. iii. 15.)

It is singular that no travellers have visited the river at the time when they might fairly expect to see it in its most enlarged condition. This is owing to their visits having been generally paid in company with the pilgrim caravan, for the sake of the protection thus obtained. Maundrell, and others after him, are wrong in expecting that if the river were at all much enlarged in our day, *that* would be the time of the year to find it overflown. In the cases of rivers, the overflow of which is caused by the melting of the snows in or near which they have their source, we have always found the season more advanced before this effect takes place, as is indeed obvious from the increased warmth which is required to dissolve the immense quantities of snow which have been deposited upon the mountains. We should expect, therefore, to find the river-flood rather in May than in March or the early part of April. This is the case with the Euphrates, Tigris, and other rivers liable to increase from the same cause; and this, by-the-bye, incidentally corroborates the statement in a preceding page, that April, rather than March, was *anciently* the initial month of the Hebrew year, for, according to that, the "tenth day of the first month" (or say, of the first moon *after* the vernal equinox) brings the time of overflow forward, in accordance with the statement we have just made; and in reference to this statement we have the satisfaction to find Lord Lindsay say, that *in June* "the upper bed of the river was still moist from the floods." By the "upper bed" we presume he intends to indicate that which Paxton describes as being covered with alluvial sediment. Now that travellers are beginning to visit the river at different times of the year, we may soon hope for more positive information on the subject.

Several streams in Palestine, which are absolutely dry in summer, become large and powerful streams in the season of flood, and there is not the least reason to question that there is still—since the physical causes still endure—a corresponding increase in the stream of the Jordan during the same season. The difference in the appearance of rivers liable to this periodical increase when overflown, and when in their ordinary state, cannot perhaps be better illustrated than by reference to the vast difference in the appearance of many of our own rivers, near their estuaries, when the tide is at ebb and when at flow.

The breadth and depth of the Jordan, in its ordinary condition, at the place where we have so long detained the reader, are not very considerable. But both the breadth and depth of this river vary so greatly in different parts of its course, that no general inference is to be deduced from that circumstance. Indeed, this spot is, probably speaking, one of the fords of the river, and therefore more practicable, both as to the breadth and depth, than other points above and below. As to the breadth here, accounts vary between twenty and thirty yards, and an average may therefore be struck at twenty-five. The depth is not so well ascertained. Shaw says, three yards *at the brink*; but it does not appear at what point he made this observation. Maundrell, who certainly was at the Catholic place of ablution, says that its depth was there greater than his height. Mr. Paxton, who was at the lower point in the month of October, thought it might then have been forded but for the rapidity of the current; and Mr. Arundale, who was there in the same month, actually represents it as being forded, in a drawing made by him. Mr. Paxton, notwithstanding the strong current, swam across the river and back again in safety; and in this same month of October the Marquis of Waterford performed the same feat "without difficulty." We suspect, however, that this could not be done at the time of pilgrimage in early spring, when the stream appears to be fuller and the current stronger than in the fall of the year. At all events, the current is then so strong, that, according to all accounts, many of the pilgrims are swept away by it; and although most of them save themselves by getting hold of the willows or bushes that overhang the stream, a year seldom passes in which some of them are not drowned.*

The water has here, and for the remainder of its course, a muddy, or, as some describe it, a sulphurous white appearance, derived, it would seem, from its having passed through beds of sandy clay. It is, however, very wholesome, always cool, and nearly tasteless. Although passing through some saline tracts, it does not contain more than one three-hundredth of its weight of salts; but these are of *the same kinds* which are found more abundantly in the waters of the Dead Sea.

Such travellers as have proceeded from this point to the head of the Dead Sea have generally journeyed at some distance west from the river. Mr. Stephens, however, tracked it down to the lake, following all its flexures. He states that, below the place of pilgrimage, there is no point on the river that offers any natural attractions to the traveller. The stream contracts to about thirty paces wide a little below the place of bathing, but again widens as it approaches its termination. Speaking generally of this portion of the river, Mr. Stephens says, "It is a small, broken, and muddy stream, running between banks of barren sand, without beauty or verdure; and if it were not for the associations connected with it, a man would turn from it as the most uninteresting of rivers." This, it will be remarked, is the observation of an American, an-

* "While I was looking on, two men, a Russian and a Greek, were overpowered by the torrent, and as neither of them could swim, they clung to each other, and were soon under water. The Russian was entangled among the roots of trees, and rose to the surface; but though he seized some overhanging branches, with the grasp of a perishing man, the current was too strong, and he was again carried away by the stream. He was, however, saved at some distance lower down, but the Greek was never seen after he first sank. I was told that a Turk was also drowned at the same place, but I did not witness the circumstance. It excited little attention among the people, and they continued to enter the water with the same fearlessness as before."—Hardy's 'Notices of the Holy Land.'

customed to magnificent rivers:—but we will not repeat what has been said on this point in a preceding page. This traveller in one place saw some Arabs wading across; and yet the river, as far as he could judge, had not fallen more than two feet. "For the last two or three miles it runs between perpendicular banks of sand, from five to ten feet high, and its pure waters are already contaminated by the pestiferous influence of the bituminous lake. On the left it stops even with the shore; but on the right the bank runs out to a low sandy point, round which a quantity of drift-wood is collected; and here, with a gentle ripple of its waters, the Jordan enters the Dead Sea." If this account is different from others, it is doubtless because of the difference, at different times of the year, to which we have already adverted. Thus Mr. Jolliffe describes the stream as being, at its embouchure, deep and rapid, rolling a considerable volume of waters into the Dead Sea. Its width appeared to him to be from 200 to 300 feet.* The current was so violent, that a Greek servant who attempted to cross it, though strong, active, and an expert swimmer, found it impracticable. This was the more to be regretted as he was to have taken across one end of a measuring line, whereby the actual breadth might have been ascertained. It appears that the river does not extend its current into the Dead Sea, as some of the older writers allege; but is stopped at once by the denser waters of the lake.

Having examined the river Jordan thus in detail, there is little need of other collective observations than the above account has comprehended. It may be well, however, that the reader should remember that the described points are for the most part fords, and where, therefore, from the very nature of the distinction, the river is more shallow than in other places. Several attempts have been made to estimate the average breadth and depth of the Jordan between the two lakes. Dr. Shaw took its average breadth at thirty yards, and its depth at nine feet, and assumed its speed to be two miles an hour; on which data he calculated that the river discharged into the Dead Sea daily 6,090,000 tuns of water. Volney makes the breadth from sixty to eighty feet, and the depth ten or twelve feet. Mariti reckons the average breadth, at ordinary times, as sixty feet, and the depth from seven to nine feet; and he affirms that at the seasons of its overflow the inundation extends for four miles, and that sometimes the inequality of the soil then parts it into two different beds. Legh compares the river to the Thames below Oxford, but describes it as more rapid. Elliot reckons that between the two lakes the breadth of the stream varies from thirty to sixty yards, and its depth from six to sixteen feet. If we collate these statements with the observations (already recorded) of other travellers made at various points, we shall see reason to conclude that the true average breadth may be about thirty yards, and the depth eight or nine feet.

We have already had occasion to remark how singularly low the valley through which this river flows lies, as compared with the central part of Canaan, and with the country beyond Jordan. Some notion of this may be formed from the fact that, according to Mr. Russegger, the bathing-place of the pilgrims is not less than 1269 feet below the level of the Mediterranean, while at the head of the Dead Sea the depression reaches to 1319 French feet, or nearly 1400 English feet, below the same level. This depression occasions, along the borders of the river, a marked distinction of climate, which we shall find another occasion to describe.

Although the water is lways turbid in the latter part of the river's course, it is said that when taken from the stream and left in a vessel, it soon clears itself, and deposits a black sediment containing bituminous particles. Nevertheless it is soft, incorruptible, and abounds in fish. In all times pilgrims have been accustomed to take home with them, not only willow-staves cut from the banks of the Jordan, and pebbles from its bed, but also bottles of the water, to which by reason of its alleged sanctity, peculiar virtues of healing to the body and the soul were ascribed. Vases of Jordan water were received as valuable presents by the princes of Christendom, who made use of it in the baptism of their children, it being deemed far more efficacious than any other water in cleansing from the taint of original sin.†

Having now attended the Jordan to the Dead Sea, that singular body of water next requires our attention.

The awful catastrophe whereby the fruitful plain of Siddim underwent that change by which this lake is usually supposed to have been formed, has already been noticed in the historical portion of this work, and need not detain us in this place.

* Mr. Robinson says, about fifty yards.

† Lindsay, ii. 65; Paxton, 158; Arundale, 80; Stephens, ii. 361—363; Jolliffe, 115; Robinson, 70; Elliot, ii. 477; Shaw, ii. 156; Mariti, ii. 326, 327; Nau, 272.

This lake is known by various names in the Scriptures,—as *the Sea of the Plain*,* from its situation in the great hollow or plain of the Jordan, or, perhaps, from its covering the ancient and beautiful plain of Siddim; the *Salt Sea*,† from the extreme saltness of its waters; and *the East Sea*,‡ from its situation with respect to the east of Judea, and in contradistinction to the West Sea, or the Mediterranean. By Josephus, and the classical writers in general, it is also called *Lacus Asphaltites*, from the quantities of asphaltum which are found in it and on its borders. *Mare Mortuum*, or *the Dead Sea*, was another of its names, and that by which it is now generally known in Europe. But the natives now call it *Bahr Lout*, the Sea of Lot, or *Bahr Mutneh*, the Stinking Sea.

This very remarkable body of water was as much an object of curiosity and wonder in ancient as it has been in modern times. But the ancient genius being essentially exaggerative, it became invested with many circumstances of horror and wonder, which do not properly belong to it, and from which it has hardly been yet cleared.

As the lake has not yet been fully explored and surveyed, as there is much reason to hope it will soon be, it may be still said that there is no authority for the description of it equal to that of Josephus, whose account necessarily embodies the information possessed by those who had for ages been inhabitants of the country, and by whom it must have been intimately known in every part. We shall, therefore, as the most eligible course, give his account, and then offer our observations in the same order in which his details are given, to illustrate or explain the several particulars.

The length of the lake he states as 580 stades, and its breadth 150. This is rendered by his translators and interpreters into 72 miles long by 18 broad, it being very convenient to consider the stade as equivalent to the furlong, of which eight make one mile. In fact, the word *stade* is usually rendered by *furlong* in most old translations and descriptions from ancient sources. But it is forgotten that while of the Roman stades there were indeed 600 to the degree, there was the older and shorter Greek stade of 700 to the degree, that is, of about ten to the mile. Now we have satisfied ourselves, by comparing the measurements of Josephus between known points, that he employs this shorter measure; and that, therefore, he intends to describe the Asphaltic Lake as not more than 56 miles long by 15 broad.

The shores he describes as unfruitful; the waters were very bitter, and so dense of body, that they bore up the heaviest things that were thrown into it; nor would it be easy for any one to sink therein, even if he wished. Accordingly, when Vespasian visited the lake, he made experiment of this, by causing some men who could not swim to have their hands tied behind them and to be cast into the lake, when it was seen that they were buoyed up by the water, even as light bodies are impelled upward by the wind.

The colour of the water was observed to change in a very remarkable manner. It altered its appearance regularly three times every day, according to the difference in the direction in which the rays of the sun shone upon and were reflected from it. But this, we may observe, is very natural, and occurs more or less in every lake hemmed in by high mountains.

It appears that then, as now, masses of black bitumen, of which we have spoken in another place (p. xxv.), were thrown up to the surface. Josephus compares these masses, quaintly enough, to headless bulls, both in shape and size; adding, that men went out in boats to collect it, which was a work of some labour, from the tenacity of the mass, which rendered it difficult to proportion the quantity taken on board to the burden of the vessel. It was used for caulking ships, and in embalmments, as well as for various medicinal purposes.

Josephus speaks of *the land of Sodom*, the desolation of which has been recorded elsewhere, not as the land now covered by the lake, but as the land which still bordered on this lake. This, he says, was once a happy and blessed country; but, for the iniquities of its people, was burnt up and consumed by the fires of heaven. Of this Divine judgment the land still offered abundant traces. Even some remains of the ruined cities might still be perceived. The fruits which grew there were also appropriate monuments of its condition; for while to the eye they seemed pleasant and good for food, they were crushed in the hand that plucked them, and offered nothing but dust and ashes.

From other Jewish sources we get little further information. We only learn that its bitumen was one of the ingredients in the holy incense, perhaps to render it inflammable; and that it was usual among the later Jews to devote to "the Salt Sea" anything

* Deut. iii. 17; iv. 19. † Deut. iii. 17; Josh. xv. 5. ‡ Ezek. xlvii. 18; Joel ii. 20.

destined to rejection and cursing, and that might by no means be used.

It is surprising how little has been added, until very recently, to the account which Josephus gives. The older travellers seldom saw anything but what they went purposely to see, or did anything but what they had purposed to do. The journey to that quarter has always, from the time of Christ till now, been dangerous from being infested by robbers and Bedouins. And it was so great a thing to visit the Jordan, and in its stream to leave the taint of original sin, and to secure the soul and body from the power of hell, that few of the pilgrims concerned themselves about so comparatively trifling and foreign a matter as a visit to the Dead Sea. The best information is that supplied by the monks and missionaries, whose long residence in the country afforded them many opportunities of obtaining information which could not be equally open to the pilgrim or passing traveller. And, upon the whole, as far as substantial facts are concerned, it is probable that very nearly as much information concerning this sea existed in books a hundred and sixty years ago as at the present time, notwithstanding the seeming discoveries which have been made in that quarter within the last thirty years. The accounts of the old travellers do not differ from one another more than those of the modern; and the differences in both cases may be referred to the same causes—the different times of the year in which the visits were made, and the difference of temperament in the visitors, and the greater or less manifestation in them of those imaginative faculties which give their own hue to the objects they regard.

With respect to the dimensions of the lake, the old travellers differ less among themselves perhaps than those of later date. The average of their accounts would make it about forty-five miles in length by ten in breadth, which differs little from the measurement we have interpreted Josephus to give, and agrees as nearly as may be with the dimensions given to it in the map published by Dr. Robinson.

Antoninus Martyr merely speaks of the bitumen and sulphur of the lake, and the absence of any living thing on its waters, or of trees or verdure on its shores. But he adds that in July and August it was usual in his time for lepers to resort to the lake, and, bathing in its waters, it sometimes pleased God that they were healed.

Brocard confirms the account of its sterile shores. A hideous vapour, he says, rises from the lake, so that the smoke and darkness by which it was invested made it no inapt type of hell. This vapour is so deleterious, that the barbarians inhabiting the neighbourhood took care to fix themselves beyond the point to which it continues to be injurious when driven before the wind.

Other old writers describe the water as an abominable infusion of nitre and sulphur, so offensive and nauseous to the smell and taste, that the salt of the lake was never applied to any use. Arculfus notices the saline deposit on the borders of the lake, caused by the absorption, by heat, of the water thrown high up the shore by tempests, or that is left when the lake has sunk to its usual level after the periodical overflow.

Anselm contradicts much that previous writers had stated. He had bathed his feet in the lake, and had seen naked Arabs and Greeks bathing their whole persons, without being at all annoyed by the fetor or the pestilential vapours of which so much had been said. And as to the sterility of the borders, he declares there was no part of the Holy Land in which he saw better pasturage; the absence of trees he seems to allow by his silence.

Some of the middle age writers attribute the absence of boats upon the lake to the injurious effects of the vapour, so that men could not endure it, and that it is therefore, in effect, not navigable. But this is contradicted by the account already copied from Josephus; and Scheriff ibn Idris bears witness that there were some few vessels on the lake in his time. A more recent contradiction will presently be adduced.

We know no early writer who pretends, as often stated in later times, that the vapours of this lake are so fatal to birds that they cannot pass over it or remain on its borders. Eugene Roger, who saw that the vapour, of which so much had been said, was not a spontaneous exhalation from the lake, but was an absorption of moisture from the lake by the heat of the procumbent air, alleges that it was so sulphurous that *insects* could not endure it. And this may be true while the process of absorption is going on with great activity; for we have evidence that great numbers of *locusts* have been seen lying dead on the borders of the lake.

The same writer affirms that the salt of the Dead Sea *was* in use for culinary purposes in Jerusalem: and this is confirmed by Irby and Mangles, who saw people collecting the salt towards the southern extremity of the lake; and by Madden, who met people who were bound from Jerusalem to the western border of the lake, to collect salt there.

That no fish will live in the lake, and that, although fish abound in the lake of Gennesareth and the river Jordan, those that make their way to the Asphaltic Lake soon die, is confirmed by Jerome, many years of whose valuable life were spent in the neighbourhood. He makes this remark in a note on Ezek. xlvii. 9, 10. Indeed, that chapter of the prophet, by describing what the lake should offer when its waters became wholesome, clearly intimates what it had not in its present unwholesome state. In this obvious view, the passage is so interesting that we transcribe it below.* That fish coming from the wholesome waters of the lake of Tiberias and the Jordan should perish in the briny and bitter waters of the Dead Sea is natural. That the lake should have no fish of its own is not of itself so evident, but is so probable, and supported by such a concurrent weight of testimony, that we have no doubt on the subject. That *shells* have been found on the shore proves nothing as to shell-fish. They or their shells might be brought down by the river and deposited on the shore; besides, that shells of some kind or other are found in almost all parts of the land.

It is not difficult to account for the assertion of Josephus that traces of the guilty cities of the plain might still be perceived. It is clear that the Jewish historian did not consider that the cities were submerged in the lake, but lay upon its borders. There is nothing in his more formal account of the lake, or in his historical notice of the destruction of Sodom, to suggest that he supposed the lake was at that time first formed. He rather states that it previously existed, but that its nature, and that of its shores, was so changed as to be no longer beautiful and rich, as of old. In short, he manifestly conceives that Sodom and the other cities stood upon the borders of the lake, in like manner as Tiberias, Capernaum, Charazin, Bethsaida, and other towns, stood upon the lake of Gennesareth; and, were this the case, it is certainly not *impossible* that in such a climate, and in a quarter so unfrequented, some traces of the doomed cities might be preserved, especially as the saline incrustations of the lake might tend to their preservation. But it is more likely that the ruins of towns of far later origin might be taken for those of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim. It is precisely in this sense that Varthema† understood Josephus, and declares himself to have seen the same ruins:—"We came to the playne or valley of Sodoma and Gomorrha, where we found it to be true that is written in Holy Scripture; for there yet remayne the ruynes of the destroyed citie as witnesse of God's wrath. We may affyrme that there are three cities, and eche of them scituate on the declyning of three hylles: and the ruyns do appeare about the heyght of three or foure cubites. There is yet seen neare, I wotte, what is lyke blood, or lyke redde waxe myxt with earth." Although this writer is not the most credible of travellers, it is very likely he saw such ruins as he mentions, but that they were the ruins of "the cities of the plain" is quite another question. Since then, however, travellers, misunderstanding the position taken by Josephus, have been seeking the ruins *under the water*; and, as the water is very clear, while the bottom doubtless contains rocks, stones, and other protuberant masses, it would be strange if, with tolerably active imaginations, they had not found what they sought. Indeed they have thrown new light on the architecture of the patriarchal ages, as they have not only seen masses of stone buildings, but rows of columns "with goodly chapiters adorned." Others

* "These waters issue out towards the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea; which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live; and *there shall be a very great multitude of fish*, because these waters shall come thither; for they shall be healed; and *everything shall live* whither the river cometh. And it shall come to pass that *the fishers shall stand upon it from Engedi even unto En-eglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets, their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea* [Mediterranean], *exceeding many*. But the miry places thereof, and *the marshes thereof, shall not be healed, they shall be given to salt*. And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, *shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed.*"—Ezek. xlvii. 8-12. In this very interesting passage we see it clearly intimated that no fish could live in the lake; that no useful trees grew on its banks; and from the context it may not be difficult to collect that there were such unprofitable fruits as the famous "apples of Sodom," which will be noticed in another place. We also observe, that the natural salt-pans to the S.E. of the lake were so useful, from the salt which they afforded the inhabitants of the country, that they were on that account exempted from the curative processes metaphorically applied to the lake itself.

† "The Navigations and Voyages of Lewes Vertomanus [Varthema, sometimes Barthema], gentelman of the citie of Rome, to the regions of Arabia, Egypte, Persia, Syria, Ethiopia, and East India, both within and without the ryuer of Ganges, &c., in the yeere of our Lorde 1503. Conteyning many notable and straunge things, both hystoricall and naturall. Translated out of Latin into Englyshe. by Richard Eden, in the yeere of our Lorde 1576."

have only *heard* from their native guides that, when the lake is very low, ruins of towns are seen at the bottom. It is possible that some travellers have stated, as the result of their own observation, what they thus heard from their guides. Mr. Elliot, on receiving this information from his guide, the sheikh of Bethlehem, observes—"While holding our opinion in abeyance on this point, we must remember we have no parallel instance from which to deduce a positive conclusion that, under water so impregnated, masonry could not endure for four thousand years." Yes, "*masonry;*" but a moment's thought will suggest a doubt whether the buildings of the patriarchal age in Syria were anything more than dried mud and timber. At the present day the inhabitants of Syria build with such materials: for although quarries are at their doors, the expense of working them, and the want of means of conveying stone even to a short distance, prevent the general use of stone for building. It does not seem at all likely that the people of the country were in the patriarchal age in a better condition in this respect than the present inhabitants. Besides, Job, who lived in that age, and on the borders of the same country, describes men as then building "houses of clay," not of stone; and if the houses of the very ancient inhabitants were of clay, and such as the present inhabitants build (and they were not likely to have been better), we know that moisture is that which they are least able to stand, and that an unusually wet season does immense damage to them, and ruins many of them; and that it would be impossible for any mass of building to remain three days in water without falling to pieces, and being resolved into a muddy sediment. Indeed the liability of such houses as existed in his time of being swept away and destroyed by water is plainly intimated by Job. (Job iv. 19, xxii. 16.) But Josephus was not guilty of the absurdity of supposing that the ruins of Sodom might still be found *under* the water.

All the old travellers were uncommonly perplexed to account for the fact that, although the Dead Sea was constantly receiving large supplies of water from the Jordan and other rivers, and had no visible outlet by which they might be again discharged, its waters were generally at the same level. At last it was concluded that the redundant waters passed off to the Mediterranean or the Gulf of Akabah by some subterraneous communication. As the Mediterranean was nearest, the communication was most generally supposed to be with that sea, especially after a story gained currency, that a wooden bowl, which a pilgrim had let fall into the Asphaltic Lake, had been picked up on the shores of Sicily. Others, justly questioning this ground, were driven to the alternative of supposing that a quantity of water equal to that which the lake received was absorbed by the burning sands on its borders. But this question has now long been set at rest. It is known that, in the case of this and many other inland lakes which have no visible outlet, the air imbibes from the surface as much water as the rivers give to it, thus keeping it at the same level, except at the season when the rivers, from rains and melted snows, pour in more than the usual supply, for then the lake rises above its usual mark. We know not that it has been seen in this state, but the fact is demonstrated by the drift-wood and other matters which lie at what may be called the high-water mark, which mark is in some places more than a mile from the ordinary edge of the water. Dr. Halley showed that the absorption of water from the surface of the Mediterranean was equal to 6904 tons daily for every square mile. Now the absorption is the most active where the heat of the air is most intense; and as there is, perhaps, hardly any place without the tropics where the heat is greater than in the basin of the Dead Sea and the valley of the Jordan, a still more active evaporation than this must be allowed, and will be found fully adequate to consume all the water which the lake receives, even if as much as Dr. Shaw has calculated. In a basin so confined, and in which the air becomes so intensely heated, and where, moreover, the water is of such peculiar qualities, the process of evaporation, or the incumbent vapour, may be expected to be oftener visible than under other circumstances. Hence the accounts of the mists, the vapours, the smoke, the darkness covering the lake, and which the older travellers supposed to be spontaneous emissions from it, and which, we believe, Morison was the first to perceive to be no other than the vapour drawn up, as from other waters, by the heat of the sun. But although he thus explains the accounts of other travellers, he acknowledges that in his repeated visits to the northern borders of the lake these appearances were never visible to him, but, on the contrary, the air seemed at all times as serene and pure as in the plain of Jericho. More recent travellers have confirmed this as the general appearance of the lake. But that there were occasional appearances which, observed *in that place*, and ill understood, offered *a foundation* for the old accounts, may be collected from Irby and Mangles, who stated that on their journey from Kerek to the southern extremity of the Dead Sea they came to a pass which commanded an extensive prospect over the lake, when they could observe the effect of the evaporation arising from it in broad transparent columns of vapour, not unlike waterspouts in appearance, but very much larger.

Having dwelt on these various particulars, which enter into a description of the Asphaltic Lake, we now beg to introduce our readers to Nau, the Jesuit, whose book we have had frequent occasions to quote and to mention with high praise. Looking at his account of the Dead Sea, we have no hesitation to declare that it is the best and most satisfactory single account that any traveller has, even to this day, furnished, although it be true that there are particular points which may have been better described by other travellers. Even the leading facts, concerning the southern termination of the lake, which, 150 years after, Captains Irby and Mangles might fairly claim to have re-discovered, were known to this intelligent traveller, and are duly registered in his book. We shall, therefore, conclude this survey of the information given by the old travellers with the substance of his description, after which we shall sum up such really additional information as more recent authorities have furnished.

The water is beautifully clear and transparent, though of most abominable taste. Only violent winds blowing from particular quarters are able to ruffle the surface of the lake, which is in general perfectly smooth and still, partly from its confined situation, and partly, perhaps, from the density of the water. Our author thinks that it is to this general stillness, rather than to the absence of fish [which he admits], or to its deleterious exhalations [which he does not admit], that the lake owes the name of the *Dead* Sea.

Of the dense and horrible vapours covering the lake, as described by most previous writers, he could see nothing in any of his journeys; but, on the contrary, the surface always appeared to be as fair and as clear from vapours as any other water. The difference in the accounts of former travellers as to the appearance of the borders, he reconciles by observing that, in general, the shores of the lake have a burnt and cindery appearance. Nevertheless, where this burnt land has been refreshed by the rains of winter and of spring, a rather profuse herbage appears, including an unusual proportion of thorny plants and hurtful herbs.

Many other particulars we omit, to avoid repeating what has been already stated, and proceed to his peculiar and interesting information respecting the southern portion of the lake.

Nau had the good fortune, when on a journey to Damascus, to form the acquaintance of Daniel, the abbot (as he called him) of the Greek monastery of Santa Saba, which is situated about midway between Bethlehem and the northern extremity of the lake. It soon transpired that this person had several times made the complete tour of the lake, under the protection of an Arab escort. Nau, eager to avail himself of this opportunity of collecting information, showed the monk a map in which the Dead Sea was represented in the usual manner; on which Daniel informed him that the representation of the southern extremity of the lake was entirely wrong. That, in fact, a second lake was there formed, of a round figure, approaching to an oval, and connected with the principal lake by a narrowed channel. That at this point the bottom of the lake was raised in such a manner as to render the water shallow and easily fordable to the other side—not indeed being higher than the middle of one's leg. This smaller and terminating lake was surrounded by plains bounded by mountains of salt. A considerable stream,* nearly from the south-east, entered this smaller and terminating lake. Nau further collected that the plains beyond were occupied by numerous Arabs of different tribes, and that in the country east of the Dead Sea there were fine and fertile plains, in which were villages, in some of which might be found churches, and a population in a considerable proportion Christian. But the churches had no priests, and the people, wanting instruction, scarcely retained any form of Christianity. Many of them were unbaptized; and such of them as from time to time desired that rite came all the way to the monastery of Santa Saba to receive it. It seems to have been with the view of ministering in some degree to the wants of those destitute churches, that the good priest undertook the frequent journeys which furnished him with this information.

These facts have received, within the present century, ample confirmation from the accounts of Seetzen, Burckhardt, Irby and Mangles, and Dr. Robinson. Indeed the exact agreement of this statement respecting the southern termination of the lake, with that which the last-named travellers have given, is very remarkable. It does, indeed, strikingly illustrate the difference in the intellectua

* Evidently the river El Ahsa, probably the Scriptural Zared.

condition of the two periods, that the information communicated by the travellers we have just named seemed all new to the public, and not only attracted immediate attention, so as to produce the corresponding modifications in all the descriptions of the Dead Sea, and in all the maps of it subsequently put forth,* but stimulated other travellers to journey in the same direction; whereas the information put forth by Nau, although on a subject in which considerable interest was felt, was perfectly abortive. It cannot be traced in any subsequent description or map; nor does any later traveller allude in any way to this statement, and far less was any one induced thereby to travel in the direction indicated. The reason is clear. Now every new fact is conveyed to the public by a multitude of different channels, till it becomes familiar by repetition; whereas, in former times, such a fact might lie hid for years or for ages in the unread work by which it was first produced.

Such is the account of the Dead Sea which we collect from old and neglected sources, with the exception of a few elucidatory points from more recent authorities. It will be found to contain nearly all that is yet known of the lake. This will appear from the notice we proceed to take of the additional information which may be collected from later travellers. This would be more evident if we confined ourselves strictly to that which is new; but we judge it advisable to introduce statements which, although not properly new, involve views or circumstances which confirm or elucidate the facts previously known.

The nature of the water of the lake has been distinctly ascertained by modern research. It is far more saline than the waters of the ocean; and, although so limpid, its specific gravity is 1·2110. A quantity of it brought to this country was subjected to chemical analysis by Dr. Marcet, and was found to contain one-fourth of its weight of salts. A slightly different result was lately obtained by Dr. W. Gregory from a quantity of the water brought home by Mr. Madden. We give both statements; and the difference between them may be accounted for by an actual difference in the qualities of the water when the lake is low and when high, from large additions of fresh water poured in by the rivers. A hundred parts of water afforded,—

Marcet.		Gregory.	
Muriate of lime	3·920	Chloride of soda, with a trace of bromine	9·58
Muriate of magnesia	10·246	Chloride of magnesium	5·28
Muriate of soda	10·360	Chloride of calcium	3·05
Sulphate of lime	0·054	Sulphate of lime	1·31
	24·580		19·25

Those, as already noticed, are the same salts which, in an incomparably smaller quantity, are held in solution in the waters of the Jordan also.

The extraordinary saltness of this lake is obviously owing to the quantities of saline matter brought in by the rivers from the saline tracts over which they pass, and more particularly by the winter torrents which receive and convey into the lake the rains which have washed over the salt-hills at the south-eastern extremity of the lake. It is easy to imagine how this constant supply of saline matter to a lake of narrow dimensions, without any visible outlet, must produce an accumulation of salt which cannot pass off by evaporation.

When taken up in a glass the water appears perfectly clear; but when viewed *en masse* under a cloudless sky, though in some parts it reflects imperfectly the azure hue, yet in others it is quite brown, owing probably to variations in its depth. The taste is described by Mr. Elliot as indescribably nauseous, salter than the ocean, and singularly bitter, like sea-water mixed with Epsom salts and quinine, or, as Madden describes, like a solution of nitre mixed with an infusion of quassia. It acts on the eyes as pungently as smoke, and produces on the skin a sensation resembling that of "prickly heat," leaving behind a white saline deposit.

The quantity of salts which this water holds in solution accounts for its remarkable specific gravity, which every writer, from Josephus downward, has noticed. This has been found, by experiment, to exceed that of rain-water by more than sixteen per cent. "We found it practically," says Mr. Elliot, "for our whole party, consisting of five persons, plunged in and remained some time in the water. Although the assertion be not true that a flat dense mass of iron will be sustained on the surface, yet a man who cannot float elsewhere finds no difficulty here. Having proceeded some way into the lake till his shoulders are nearly immersed, his feet are actually borne off the ground, and he walks, as it were, on water; or else his legs are forcibly raised, and he is *compelled* either to float or swim. To sink or dive would require some effort." The specific gravity of the water accounts also for its reputed immobility; it is less easily excited than any other known lake, and sooner resumes its wonted stillness.(*)

No modern traveller has seen *smoke* issuing from the lake; but at certain times of the year the surface is covered with a thick mist. In summer the sun has such power that this dense mass of vapours is dispersed soon after its rising. The assertion of Volney, to which we have, perhaps, given too much weight in a preceding page, that smoke is *often* observed to issue from the lake, probably rests upon information derived from the Arabs, upon which no one acquainted with that people would place much dependence. That vapours exhale from the lake, which, although differing perhaps in substance, resemble in appearance those of all other lakes, is quite true; and that Arabs inhabiting a desert, the atmosphere of which is of the purest description, should call an aqueous vapour *smoke*, is not strange.

The old story, that no birds were found upon the shores of the lake, and that none could rest upon or pass over its surface without paying the penalty of death, is *not affirmed* by any of those old travellers whose statements in other matters we have been accustomed to treat with respect, but it has only been completely gainsaid and disproved by travellers of recent date. Mariti saw a great number of birds of different kinds, particularly nightingales, along the shore. Fisk, and, in a later year, Hardy, saw many birds flying about the lake, and even observed some skimming the water with as much apparent ease as in any other place. Stephens beheld a flock of gulls floating quietly on the water, and, when disturbed by him, they flew down the lake, skimming its surface, till they had carried themselves out of sight. Elliot saw more wild ducks cross the sea from Moab to the hills of Judah. Professor Robinson observes,—"Of birds we saw many. Indeed, at the early dawn *the trees* and rocks and air were full of the carols of the lark, the cheerful whistle of the quail, the call of the partridge, and the warbling of innumerable songsters, while birds of prey were screaming and soaring in front of the cliffs above." Pigeons also were observed shooting across the surface, and frogs were heard croaking merrily from the neighbourhood of a brackish fountain under the cliffs of the western shore. These last observations seem to have been made chiefly with reference to about the middle part of the western border of the lake, where vegetation, even in the form of trees, is by no means wanting. Dead locusts were found by Irby and Mangles on the south-eastern borders of the lake. The sight of such a multitude of carcases of creatures that might have perished in passing over these waters might seem to confirm the old popular notion, but the travellers recollected that such a spectacle was sufficiently common upon other shores, as Sicily and above El Arish. This, however, *proves* nothing against Roger's assertion that locusts could not cross the lake. For those which were seen on the shores of Sicily and above El Arish had obviously fallen into the water from fatigue in attempting to cross the Mediterranean—a very different undertaking from that of crossing the Dead Sea. We feel sure that locusts would not be fatigued to cross that lake, and that the presence of their carcases in large numbers on the shore must be ascribed to some other cause than that which produces a similar appearance on the shores of the Mediterranean. This point is, therefore, still in doubt. The same travellers saw a pair of Egyptian ducks, and afterwards a flight of pigeons, pass over the lake.

It is, however, true that several travellers, of as great credit as those from whom we have taken the preceding statements, declare that they saw no birds near the lake. In fact this, like the question of vegetation, seems to be one of seasons. The want of fish in the lake would satisfactorily account for the absence of the aquatic species at any time; and the land-birds we should hardly expect to find there, save when the vegetative powers which remain in the stricken soil have been called forth by the periodical rains; and, in fact, those travellers who have not observed birds, visited the lake at the season when the temporary vegetation has disappeared before the intense and concentrated heat of the advancing season. The birds seem to disappear with it. Indeed it is not unlikely that the borders of this warm basin are the retreat during the colder part of the year of numerous birds, which in summer are found in other and cooler, as well as then more productive and pleasant, parts of the land.

The differences in the accounts of travellers, as to the general aspect of the lake, can, we think, be explained without much difficulty. Setting aside the influence of a prepared imagination, it may be

* When it is recollected that the work of Captains Irby and Mangles remained unpublished, and consequently difficult to procure, for several years, the manner in which their information became common property to the public the more strikingly illustrates the difference to which these observations are directed.

observed that there are actual differences *at the same place* at different seasons of the year, and that there are actual differences at different parts of the lake. The first point has been lately explained, and need not be dwelt on here; and, with respect to the latter, we need only add to what has been said in the preceding chapter, that the borders seem to increase in fertility on both sides the further we advance to the south, except at the very extremity of the lake southward, which seems even more desolate than the northern extremity. In short, there seems a certain limit beyond the water's edge, within which nothing but such few plants as love a saline soil can be found; but beyond this limit an increasing vegetation appears, where ordinary circumstances are favourable. So when the breadth between the water's edge and the enclosing hills does not overpass this limit, all appears barren, except when the rigid and austere soil is mollified and excited by abundant rains; but where the intervening plain is broad, so as to afford a space beyond this limit, the soil becomes more or less cultivable, and, as we advance towards the roots of the mountains, becomes spontaneously productive of various plants, shrubs, and trees. So likewise, when the *feet* of the mountains are within the sterile boundary, no vegetation appears upon them, until their ascents have sloped back beyond this sterile limit. The general borders of the lake are so much within this limit, that the average aspect is more desolate than is usually seen on the borders of lakes. It is quite clear that the evaporations from the lake are charged with saline principles unfriendly to general vegetation. Hence vegetation is not encouraged by the moisture thus exhaled, and which might otherwise compensate for the extreme drought of its borders. Indeed, from the *wholesome* moisture supplied by evaporation, the borders of lakes, even in places where rain only periodically falls, are so generally clothed with trees and verdure, that water and vegetation become associated in the mind, so that the disappointment and surprise give an exaggerated effect to the impressions which the comparative sterility of this remarkable lake produces on the spectator.

This theory—if an explanation derived from the careful comparison of a large collection of facts can be called a theory—appears to us to explain many difficulties and apparent contradictions; and we are well assured that its correctness will abide the test of any observations which future travellers may make.

Subject to this and preceding explanations, we will trust our readers with two differently coloured descriptions of the lake, as viewed from the northern extremity. Both, while they give us general impressions, are clear and sensible, and offer some further facts necessary to complete an account which we have been anxious to render as full and satisfactory as existing materials allow. The first is that of the Rev. C. B. Elliot, whose visit was at the usual season of the pilgrimage, at Easter.

"During a ride of two hours along, or at some little distance from, the banks of Jordan, we saw not a single man or animal, and reached in safety its embouchure, where it discharges its muddy waters with considerable force into the Sea of Sodom. The soil appeared to be a mixture of sand and clay, the former being superficial, and apparently a deposition from the water during its annual overflowings. Very minute shells lie scattered in myriads over the plain; but in the immediate vicinity of the lake of death even these symptoms of a by-gone life are no longer visible; their place is occupied by little masses of a white frothy substance exuding from the earth, resembling in shape and size the turbinated cones thrown up by worms. When taken in the hand, these almost melted, leaving a smell of brimstone; they looked like a sulphurous efflorescence in combination with salt; but the taste indicated the presence of something more than these ingredients. No signs of vegetation are to be seen except sea-weed and another marine production.

"The air, even at seven o'clock in the morning, was heavy and oppressive, though the sky was cloudless and the heat not unpleasant. We saw no symptoms of the smoke said to be the effect of bituminous explosions underneath the lake and to arise constantly from its surface, but a mist covered it, which might have been nothing more than the ordinary effect produced by the morning sun. Hemmed in as the water is by mountains absolutely barren, themselves of a gloomy hue, the sand and clay below reflecting no brighter rays, it is not surprising that every object should wear a dreary aspect, and the very eye be deceived into a belief—if deception it be—that the only colour it discerns partakes of a sombre livid tint. The air is regarded as pestilential; no human dwellings are to be seen; and probably no spot in the world is so calculated as this to convey the idea of an entrance into the kingdom of death. Here death wields a leaden sceptre. The eye perceives only the absence of life. The ear is cheered by no sound,—even the waveless sea sleeps in mysterious silence. The taste and smell detect only that mineral which is too intimately associated in the mind with unquenchable fire and eternal death; and the sense of feeling becomes more sympathetically affected, as though every nerve were on the verge of dissolution. In this region of death the living exception is ready to exclaim, 'How dreadful is this place!'"

The other description is from the work of an American traveller, the Rev. J. D. Paxton.

"In going from the Jordan to the Dead Sea, for a considerable space not a blade of grass or vegetation was to be seen. It was so soft and dusty, that the horses sank to their fetlocks; and in some places it was rendered uneven by the irregular mounds, many of which did not seem to know what vegetation is. Whether this peculiar barrenness was owing to the unfavourable nature of the soil I know not; possibly this may be the case. I did not see any other indication of salt, which has been reported as found on the surface of the ground, until very near the sea. Between this barren district and the Dead Sea there was an evident change in the aspect of the ground—we found some dry grass and small bushes; and as we came nearer the shore the bushes increased in size and number, and some spots might be called thickets. We saw also a cane-brake and a variety of other growth. To my agreeable surprise, I found the shore fine, smooth, gravelly, and deepening very slowly, so that a person might wade in for some distance. There was along the shore drift-wood, most of it small, but still larger than I had seen on the Jordan. This would seem to indicate that somewhere on its shores there is more timber than we found in the spot we visited. The water was not only very salt, but exceedingly bitter, as much so as most travellers have stated. The great density of the water was amply proved by its power to bear up the body. There is some truth in the saying that it requires an effort to keep the feet and legs under, so as to use them to advantage in swimming. Some writers have, however, stated the matter in rather too strong terms.

"I could lie on my back in the water, with my head, hands, and feet all out at the same time, and remain thus as long as I pleased without making any motion whatever; this I could not do in any other water that I have been in. Still it is carrying the matter too far, and beyond the truth, when it is said to be so heavy, or so dead, that it never rises in waves, but always lies smooth and unruffled, let the wind blow as it will. The drift-wood thrown out is evidence to the contrary. The shore exhibited proof that but a day or two before the waves had run high; but the best proof of all was the ocular and sensible one, that they were then chasing each other out on the shore, as they do in all other seas; true, they did not run high, but then there was not much wind to make them. The water was so clear that the bottom could be seen with great distinctness. In wading in, there was at some places more softness at the bottom than I was led to expect from the firm character of the shore. There were, however, some spots on the shore where the soil gave way under our feet, and exhibited a kind of quicksand, as I demonstrated by getting into one of them over my shoes. Still the bank, the water, and the bottom, so far as I saw and tried it, had much less of the terrible, fearful, and unnatural, than I had expected. Instead of that dark, gloomy, and turbid spread of water, that from my childhood I had imagined, it struck me as a very pleasant lake. It reminded me of the beautiful lake of Nice. As to the deep and fearful gloom which many writers describe as hanging over it, I must think that it is mainly found in their imaginations. It is not wonderful that a place which, for its great wickedness, was doomed to such a fearful catastrophe as were the cities which stood on this plain, should be looked upon with fear and horror. It is a wise provision of our nature that it should be so. It operates, and no doubt it is designed to do so, as a check to that fearful wickedness that calls down such a doom. It is not an uncommon thing for people to think that there is something fearful and gloomy in places where they know awful crimes have been perpetrated; and on this principle, perhaps, we may account for the fact that so many travellers have dwelt on the deep gloom which hung over the water, and the fearful desolation that reigned over the whole region. Now to me it did not appear thus: the shores, the waters, and the lake, had a natural and even a pleasing appearance, the more so as, from my old habits of thinking, I expected something of the fearful, if not terrible. The district was, it is true, rather destitute of trees and vegetation, but not more so than many districts that I have seen; not more so than the district from Mount Olivet to the plain of Jordan, and a very large district near Damascus, which I noticed in a former journey. There are more small trees, bushes, canes, and other vegetable growth, for a quarter of a mile along

the shore, than there are on some districts north-west of Damascus, perhaps ten miles square, leaving out the narrow slips of land irrigated by the water of the Bareda. There is quite a cluster of small trees or shrubs, at a point on the edge of the water, where it is soft and swampy. The question whether there are any living things in these waters is one that I am not able to decide from my own observation. I saw none.

"There is a small island fifty or a hundred yards from the shore, rising six or eight feet above the level of the water, and appears to have some stones at the upper part of it. We thought we could see most distinctly another island far to the south.* As similar statements have often been made, and again contradicted, we looked at it the more carefully; and our conclusion was, notwithstanding all the declarations to the contrary, *it must be an island*, and one of considerable size, unless connected with the other shore by a very low neck of land which the great distance prevented our seeing; this time will show. It is a singular fact that a piece of water, which for ages has excited more intense interest than any other in the world, should yet be so little known, and so few should have been found who have made a serious attempt to explore it. There has not, as far as I know, been one boat on the waters of the Dead Sea for ages, if from the days of Abraham; there may have been in the days of the Jewish nation, but I have not seen it confirmed by any writer. Last year an intelligent Irishman took a boat across from Acre to the lake of Tiberias, and after amusing himself with it on that lake, he passed down the Jordan to the Dead Sea, and spent some days in exploring it. How far he went to the south, and what discoveries he made, is not known. He had the misfortune to be taken sick, owing in part, it was supposed, to his imprudence and useless exposure. With much difficulty he got back to Jericho, and was then carried to Jerusalem, where he died. He had taken but few notes, which were unintelligible to all but himself.† When inquired of concerning his expedition on the Dead Sea, he declined answering until he should recover, when he would tell them all about it. But death closed up the communication for ever. The boat was taken out and carried to Jericho, as I have since learned. Were some one, acquainted with navigating a small vessel, and capable of taking soundings and making a proper survey of the lake, to spend a month or two in doing it, and to publish a full account, with a correct map of the sea and the coast, he would confer a very great favour on the Christian world. It would be so easy of execution, and of so universal interest when done, that I wonder that none of those men who long for public fame have not before now thought of it."

We sincerely join in the regret that the public have been so unhappily excluded from reaping the benefit of the observations made by Mr. Costigan (for that was the name of "the intelligent Irishman" of whom Paxton speaks) during his romantic expedition. The further information collected by Mr. Stephens is, for the present at least, of too much interest and value to be omitted.

This gentleman reports that he took some pains to trace out the man who had attended Costigan during this voyage, and had the good fortune to find him at Beirout. "He was a little, dried-up Maltese sailor; had rowed round the lake without knowing why, except that he was paid for it; and what he told bore the stamp of truth, for he did not seem to think that he had done anything extraordinary. He knew as little about it as any man could know who had been over the same water; and yet, after all, perhaps he knew as much as any one else could learn. He seems, however, to have observed the coast and the soundings with the eye of a sailor, and I got him to make me a map,‡ on which I marked down the particulars I received from his lips, and by which it appears that they had completed the whole tour of the lake." The following is the substance of the observations thus obtained:—

The tour of the lake took eight days, the voyagers sleeping on shore every night, except once, when, afraid of some suspicious-looking Arabs whom they saw upon the mountains, they slept on board, beyond the reach of gun-shot from the land. All this time was not, however, occupied in making the direct tour of the lake; for during their course they crossed and recrossed it several times. They sounded every day, frequently with a line of 175 brachia (about six feet each), and found the bottom rocky, and of very unequal depth, sometimes ranging thirty, forty, eighty, twenty brachia, all within a boat's length (!). Sometimes the lead brought up sand, like that of the mountains on each side. They failed in finding the bottom but once, and in that place there were large bubbles all around for thirty paces, rising probably from a spring. In one place they found on the bank a hot sulphur-spring. In three different places they found ruins, and could clearly distinguish large hewn stones, which seemed to have been used for buildings. That which in the distance has appeared to many travellers as an island, towards the southern extremity of the lake, was found to be a tongue of land, as had long before been shown by Captain Mangles. This incidental corroboration of the old man's statement, from a source which he could not know, and with which Stephens himself was unacquainted, may lead us to regard his statement as in general trustworthy.

This man also reported that the boat, when empty, floated a palm higher in the water than when in the Mediterranean. It was then the month of July, and the weather from nine to five was dreadfully hot. Every night the north wind blew, and the waves were worse than in the Gulf of Lyons. "In reference to their peculiar exposures, and the circumstances which hurried poor Costigan to his unhappy fate, he said that they had suffered exceedingly from the heat. The first five days Costigan took his turn at the oars; but on the sixth day their water was exhausted, and Costigan gave out. The seventh day they were obliged to drink the water of the sea, and on the eighth day they were near the head of the lake, and he himself (the Maltese) exhausted, and unable any longer to pull an oar. There he made coffee from the water of the sea, and a favourable breeze springing up, for the first time they hoisted their sail, and in a few hours reached the head of the lake." The rest has been told above by Paxton.

A very similar attempt to this has more recently been made by two scientific gentlemen, Mr. G. Moore and Mr. W. G. Beek. Their intention was to make a trigonometrical survey of the Dead Sea, to ascertain its depth, and to procure collections of all that could be of use to science. From Jaffa they conveyed a boat, with stores, &c., to the lake, passing through Jerusalem and descending on Jericho—a work of great labour, considering that they had no assistance from the authorities, but rather the contrary. After surveying a good portion of the shores, these gentlemen were obliged to abandon their work, the guards and guides declaring they would not proceed. The width of the sea has been established beyond a doubt; soundings also have been taken, showing great depth. The length of the sea was found to be much less than has generally been supposed. These are all the facts, or rather intimations, which these gentlemen have as yet thought proper to lay before the public;* but Mr. Moore has, we believe, since completed the unfinished undertaking, under the operation of a firman from the Pasha of Egypt; and we may hope to be eventually made acquainted with the full results of this very spirited enterprise. It thus appears that what Mr. Paxton so anxiously wished to be done, has actually been effected, although the public has not yet been informed of the result.

We have so often alluded to the discoveries of Captains Irby and Mangles about the southern extremity of the Dead Sea, that it seems undesirable to conclude this notice without stating such of the leading facts as have not already been anticipated.

Their first journey in this quarter was from Hebron round the southern extremity of the lake to Kerek. When, on this journey, they first obtained a view of the southern termination of the lake with the back-water, or smaller lake, and plain at the end of it, it appeared evident to them that the sea must be of much less length than ancient authors had reported. But we may observe that from their account it is far more than likely that this plain at the end formed an integral part of the lake, in which case its dimensions would correspond very closely with those deduced in a preceding page from the account of Josephus. And the conclusion that this plain was formerly covered with the waters of the lake, even to the foot of the hills, southward, which separate it from the Wady Arabah, seems to us probable for another reason. For if the plain were then passable, it seems difficult to make out why the Israelites, when wishing to pass into the country east of the lake, did not go that way, which would have been the nearest and the most open they could take; but, instead of that, they sought permission to pass through the valleys of Mount Seir, and when that was refused them, had no alternative but to take a long and difficult circuit, to get into the eastern country by rounding the *southern* extremity of the Seir mountains, near the head of the eastern arm of the Red Sea—a most unaccountable journey if there had then been that access to the eastern country at the extremity of the Dead Sea which is now open.

* The first is a real island; the other must have been an illusion.

† "Unfortunately for the interests of science, he had always been in the habit of trusting greatly to his memory; and, after his death, the missionaries in Jerusalem found no regular diary or journal, but merely brief notes written on the margins of books, so irregular and confused, that they could make nothing of them."—STEPHENS.

‡ Copied in the original American edition, but injudiciously omitted in the English reprint, to which only we have access.

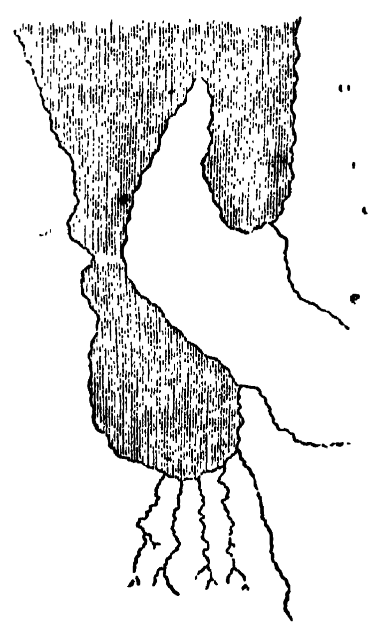
* In the 'Geographical Journal,' vol. vii. pt. 2, 1837.

But to return to our travellers. They spent the night near the hills skirting this plain, and, finding plenty of drift-wood at "high-water mark," they attempted to kindle a fire to bake bread, but were unable to do so in consequence of the salt with which the wood was impregnated. The abundant manifestations of salt which they found in crossing the plain have already been noticed in this work: for this reason we limit the present notice to their other observations. It appears from their statement that when the sandy flats around the southern bay, or smaller lake (which they call "the back-water"), are left dry by the effects of evaporation, water is still left in various hollows, or depressions of the surface, from which it gradually disappears, partly by evaporation and partly by draining, leaving a thick residuum of salt. Those that still retained water, or were still wet, had a strong marshy smell, similar to that which is perceivable on most of the muddy flats in salt-water harbours. This it is, they imagine, which gave rise to the unfavourable reports of the ancients, of the disagreeable smell of the waters of the Dead Sea; for they affirm that the water of the main body of the lake is perfectly free from any smell whatever.

On their return from their expedition from Kerek to Wady Mousa, the same travellers made a special excursion for the purpose of exploring the southern termination of the lake.

In this journey they observed a rather profuse vegetation, so comparatively near to the beach as might, without explanation, seem to militate against the observations we lately made. But it is to be borne in mind, that the bed being here very shallow, although the vegetation approximates to the *high-water mark*, the waters fall farther back in this quarter, after the season of flood, than in any other part of the lake, removing, to that extent, the water from which the influences unfavourable to vegetation arise. Thus, during its absence, the trees and shrubs, assisted by the fresh water which the rivers bring down,* are able to gather strength to withstand the deleterious influences to which they are, during a portion of the year, exposed. But although the waters had fallen very much below the mark of high water at the time of our travellers' visit, they describe the foliage as having a salt dew hanging upon it, which gave to the hand the same greasy sensation and appearance which it acquires when dipped in the sea itself.

The appearance which the lake assumes at its southern termination will be much better understood by the annexed plan than by a written description. From this it will be seen that a large promontory projects from the eastern shore, and turns northward, so as to enclose between itself and the eastern coast a bay about four miles long, by two broad, while between it and the western shore lies a gradually narrowing strait, which conducts into the oval basin, about five miles long by above three in width, in which the Dead Sea terminates. A small opposing promontory from the western shore narrows the strait in one place to about a mile of width; and at this point is the ford which, with the other general features of the spot, was so long ago indicated by Father Daniel. It appears that the ford is marked by stakes, and Captain Mangles' party was informed that it was fordable at all times of the year. Indeed its depth could be but inconsiderable at the time they were there, as there were asses in a small native caravan by which it had just been forded.



[Southern termination of the Dead Sea.]

The promontory from the eastern shore has a steep white ridge, running like a spine down the centre. This ridge presents steep sloping sides, seamed and furrowed into deep hollows by the rains, and terminating at the summit in sharp triangular points, standing up like rows of tents, ranged one above another. The whole is of a substance apparently partaking of the mixture of soft and broken chalk and slate, and is wholly unproductive of vegetation. The height of the eminence varies from ten to thirty feet, becoming gradually lower towards its northern extremity. At its foot, all round, is a considerable margin of sand, which varies in length and breadth according to the season, being much narrower in the dry season than in the times of flood, when we have reason to suppose that, in rough weather at least, the waves almost wash the base of the cliff.

At the base of the peninsula, not far from the bottom of the bay formed by its horn, and near a river (called Dara) which falls into that bay, the traces of an ancient site very plainly appear. Stones that have been used in building, though for the most part unhewn, are strewed over a great surface of uneven ground, and mixed both with broken bricks and pottery. This appearance continues, without interruption, quite down from the slope of the peninsula to the plain below, so that it would seem to have been a place of considerable extent. One column was noticed, and a pretty specimen of antique variegated glass was found. This our travellers think may have been the site of the ancient Zoar, in which Lot found refuge when the cities of the plain were destroyed, and on examining the matter for ourselves, we find much reason for subscribing to this opinion. Close by these is now a hut-built village, occupied by Arabs. From the heat of the climate the people go half naked in summer, and the children entirely so; and, altogether, their abode has more the appearance of a village in India or the South Seas than any that our nautical travellers had seen in the East.

Although there seems great probability, as we have already intimated, that this peninsula has, in the distant view, been sometimes taken for an island, it seems that other apparent masses, noticed in other parts, and confidently affirmed by travellers to be islands, must be attributed to an illusion; for our travellers state —"This evening, about sunset, we were deceived by a dark shade on the sea, which assumed so exactly the appearance of an island that we did not doubt of it, even after looking through a telescope. It is not the only time that such a phenomenon has presented itself to us. In two instances looking up the sea from its southern extremity, we saw it apparently closed by a low dark line, like a line of sand, to the northward; and, on another occasion, two small islands appeared to present themselves between a long sharp promontory and the western shore. We were unable to account for these appearances, but felt little doubt that they were those that deceived M. Seetzen into the supposition that he had discovered an island of some extent, which we have had an opportunity of ascertaining, beyond all doubt, does not exist."

We have, on more than one occasion, stated as a fact to which we attached much importance, that the great valley which extends between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Akabah was probably a continuation of the ancient valley of the Jordan, by which the river made its way to the Red Sea before its waters were arrested in the Asphaltic Lake. This opinion was first started by Burckhardt, and was adopted by others who afterwards visited the valley. Burckhardt, however, did not *see* how this valley connected itself with the Dead Sea. Irby and Mangles, who did so, observe that the plain at the end of it "opens considerably to the south, and is bounded at the distance of about eight miles by a sandy cliff, from sixty to eighty feet in height, and which runs directly across, and closes the valley of El Ghor, thus forming a margin for the uttermost limits of the Dead Sea to the southward, when its waters are at their greatest height.* We were told that the plain at the top of this range of cliffs continues all the way to Mecca without any interruption of mountains." This fact, confirmed and followed up, is no other than that on which the former conclusion has been lately questioned, and, we are almost sorry to admit, overturned. How it happened that the statement of Mangles was not considered to oppose an obstacle to this conclusion, we do not know, unless, as in our own case, from an unwillingness to dwell upon this single incident as irreconcileable with an opinion which such a traveller as Burckhardt thought he had good reasons to form; and also perhaps from some vague notion that these cliffs might prove to be mere sand-banks, thrown up, in the course of ages, at high-water mark.

Count du Berton examined this matter more closely. As all the passages which bear on the question have been produced in the preceding chapter, we shall not here repeat them. These, it will be recollected, show that the confining southern hills are of sandstone; that there is indeed the broad valley of a river or torrent passing through or at the end of this chain of hills, but this slopes

* To a similar cause—the dilution of the waters of the lake, at the northern extremity, by the constant supply of fresh water from the Jordan—may be ascribed the vegetation which Paxton saw near the water's edge, not far from where that river enters the lake.

* Is it not probable that Josephus and other old writers measured the Dead Sea as extending to these cliffs, as it seems actually to do at high water; and that hence arises the greater length which they give to it?

sensibly *towards* the Dead Sea, and could never, therefore, have been the bed of a river flowing in the opposite direction; that all the torrents and streams far to the south of this tend towards the basin of the Dead Sea; and that the point where the waters separate occurs below Wady Mousa, or rather at Wady Talh, about midway between the hills which border on the basin of the Dead Sea and the head of the Elanitic Gulf; all the waters north of this limit tend to the former basin, and all south of the same limit to the latter.

Professor Robinson confirms this statement in all essential points. The following passage deserves attention, as explaining what is rather obscure in the notices of the Count:—"Before us, as we advanced southward, appeared a line of cliffs, *fifty to one hundred and fifty feet in height* ["fifty or sixty," *Count B.*,] stretching across the whole broad valley, and apparently barring all further progress. They proved to be of marl ["friable sandstone," *Count B.*]; and run off from this point [the western end] S.S.E. across the valley. All along their base are fountains of brackish water, oozing out and forming a tract of marshy land towards the north. Our route now lay along the base of these cliffs, and we came in two hours to the mouth of Wady Jib [the same which Count de B. calls Wady Araba, but which is here distinguished as a Wady *in* Wady Araba], a deep valley *coming down from the south* through the cliffs; and showing the latter to be only an offset between the lower plain which we had just crossed, and *the higher level of the same great valley farther south.* The name El Ghor is applied to the valley between the Dead Sea and this offset: farther south the whole of the broad valley takes the name of El Araba, quite to Akabah. These apparent cliffs I take to be the Akrabbim of Scripture. The Wady Jib begins far to the south of Mount Hor, beyond Wady Gharandel, and flows down in a winding course *through the midst of El Araba, draining off all its waters northward to the Dead Sea.* Where we entered Wady Jib, at its northern end it is half a mile broad, with precipitous banks of chalky earth or marl, 100 to 150 feet high, and exhibiting traces of an immense volume of water *flowing northward.* It may be recollected that the waters of Wady Jarafeh in the western desert, which drains the south-east part of that desert, far to the southward of Akabah, also flow northward into El Araba, and so, of course, through Wady Jib. Hence, instead of the Jordan flowing southward to the Gulf of Akabah, we find the waters of the desert farther south than Akabah *flowing northward into the Dead Sea.* The very nature of the country shows, without measurement, that the surface of the Dead Sea must be lower than that of the Red Sea or the Mediterranean."

This is, it will be perceived, still stronger than the statement of Count de Bertou; for while he divides the waters which flow into the Araba between the Dead Sea and the Elanitic Gulf, Dr. Robinson gives them all to the Dead Sea.

After this the serious and difficult question recurs, which was obviated by the explanation by which the waters of the Jordan were carried to the Red Sea—namely, What became of the Jordan, when, as is generally supposed, it merely passed through and watered the plain which the Dead Sea now covers?—1. Were its waters consumed, like those of the Barrady at Damascus, in irrigating the fields and gardens, and in supplying water to the towns of the plain? 2. May there not have been a lake in this basin, in former times, to receive the Jordan; and then may not the "plain" or "vale" in question mean merely the borders of that lake; according to what appears to be the meaning of Josephus, who seems to speak of the land of Sodom as still existing *as land*, though in a condition sadly altered from its former state? It would not be necessary to suppose that the lake then encroached beyond the channel and ford which we have already described, and where there are appearances which may be construed to intimate to the geographer that there was an ancient breach of the waters at this point, whereby the whole country southward, down to the hills, was inundated, as it still seems to be during the season of flood, although the water beyond the ford only remains permanently in the southern lake or back-water. This would give a tract above twenty miles long by ten or twelve broad, beside the borders of the lake, as the land which was ruined at the overthrow of Sodom, and in which the "cities of the plain" were situated. In confirmation of this we might point to Gen. x. 19, in which the five cities, by being opposed to Gaza, seemed to be brought together near the present southern extremity of the lake. To this may also be added that Sodom, at least, could not well have been to the north of the channel formed by the tongue of land; for the short time which was taken by the family of Lot in escaping to Zoar shows it could not have been far from that city, which unquestionably was on the borders of the present southern extremity of the Asphaltic Lake. When viewed apart from our preconceptions on the subject, there will be found no passage of Scripture which distinctly intimates that "the plain of Siddim" was submerged. It is described as having become a region of salt and burning, and bitterness, and desolation—but not of *water*. 3. If neither of the above hypotheses be considered tenable, there seems no alternative but to consider that the overthrow of Sodom was attended by a far greater and more extensive derangement of the earth's surface—by the depression of high levels and the elevation of low ones through large tracts of country, than has hitherto been imagined, or than the Scripture would lead us to expect. We refrain at present from attempting to make up our minds to any of these alternatives, expecting that some further and clearer light may speedily be obtained from the researches which are now in progress, or which we may hope soon to be undertaken.

We will now proceed to notice the streams which fall into the Mediterranean. As they have all been named, and some of them slightly noticed in the survey of the coast given in the last Chapter, we shall now confine our attention to those which cross "the plain of the sea" southward from Sidon; and among these we shall neglect the small brooks and torrents, and limit our attention to those which are of some relative importance, or with which any circumstance of interest is connected.

The river Kasmia, which is now generally supposed to be the same as the ancient *Leontes*, is the first, which, within this limit, requires notice, and is also by far the most important, after the Orontes, of all the Syrian rivers which advance to "the great sea." It has already been noticed in a general way (471). This river is formed by the junction of several streams, all of which rise in the neighbourhood of Baalbec. After this junction it retains for more than half of its course the name of the stream which contributes the most largely to its formation, the *Nahr Liettani*, after which it takes that of *Nahr Kasmia*, the origin of which Sir W. Drummond would refer to the verb *kasam*, which signifies *to divide*, as in fact the territory of the Tyrians was separated by this river from that of their Sidonian neighbours on the north. Pursuing its way southward between the two Lebanons, it receives the waters which fall from both; and, after a course of above eighty miles, enters the sea about four miles to the north of Tyre. About the middle of its course this river was crossed by Maundrell on a stone bridge of five arches. He calls it here "a large river" (in April). The bridge was some years since repaired, and a khan for the accommodation of travellers built near it by the Emir Beshir. Some thirteen miles lower down, the river was crossed by Buckingham on his journey from Damascus to Sidon (also in April), by a bridge of two arches. The stream was here about 100 feet wide, and the water deep and rapid in its course. On its approach to the sea, the banks of this river are very picturesque. It comes out into the plain from an extensive valley among the mountains, as a large and deep river, and continues its course to the sea in various windings and meanders. On the usual road between Sidon and Tyre there was formerly a stone bridge of four arches over the stream. This was in ruins at the time of Maundrell; and its place is now supplied by a bridge of one arch, below which the stream encloses a small island.

Some of the older writers very erroneously identify this river with the ancient *Eleutherus*, an error which we believe Maundrell was the first to point out. It does not appear that this river is on any occasion mentioned in Scripture. It was on the shore between the mouth of this river and Tyre that the Phœnicians were accustomed to collect the shell-fish called the *murex*, from which they obtained the dye so famous under the name of the Tyrian purple.

The *Nahr Kardanus* is unquestionably the *river Belus* of the ancients, from which it would appear that it was consecrated to Baal by the ancient Phœnicians. It is not mentioned in Scripture, but is noticed by Josephus under the name of Beleus. It is a slender stream, the source of which does not appear to be known, although it cannot be very distant. Quite near its mouth this river is shallow enough in summer to be forded on horseback. Its sands have a fine appearance, and are famous in ancient history and fable, which attributes the first discovery of glass to the effects produced by a culinary fire kindled upon them. Although it was ultimately found that other sands possessed the same property, yet it appeared that the sand of this river might be vitrified with more ease, and that the glass was of finer quality than any other. The Phœnicians took advantage of this discovery, and the Sidonian glass was in ancient times very famous. Vessels visiting this coast used to take this sand as ballast. Down to a comparatively recent date, vessels from Italy continued to remove it for the glass-houses of Italy and Genoa; and Mariti affirms that the magnificent glasses, for the

manufacture of which that people were so long celebrated, were made from the sands of this river. It seems, however, that the same or nearly the same qualities were possessed by the sands of all the rivers of this coast, from Tyre to Joppa.

"That ancient river, *the river Kishon*," occurs farther to the south, traversing the same plain, and flowing into the south-eastern corner of the same bay of Acre. It is a much more considerable stream than the Belus, and is historically celebrated in Scripture for the overthrow of Sisera's host by its overflowing stream. It is usual to trace the source of this river to Mount Tabor, but Dr. Shaw affirms that, in travelling on the south-eastern brow of Mount Carmel, he had an opportunity of seeing the sources of the river Kishon, three or four of which lie within less than a furlong of each other, and are called *Ras el Kishon*, or the head of the Kishon. These alone, without the lesser contributions nearer the sea, discharge water enough to form a river half as large as the Isis. During the rainy season all the water which falls on the eastern side of Mount Carmel, or upon the rising grounds to the southward, empties itself into it in a number of torrents, at which times it overflows its banks, acquires a wonderful rapidity, and carries all before it. It was, doubtless, at such a season that the host of Sisera was swept away in attempting to ford it. But such inundations are extemporaneous only, without any duration;* for the course of the Kishon, which according to this account, is only about seven miles in length, runs very briskly, until within half a league of the sea. But when not augmented by rains, it never falls into the sea in a full stream, but insensibly percolates through a bank of sand, which the north winds have thrown up at its mouth. In this state Shaw himself found it in the month of April, 1722, when he passed it

Notwithstanding Shaw's contradiction, the statement that the Kishon rises in Mount Tabor has been repeated by later writers as confidently as ever. Buckingham's statement, being made with reference to the view from Mount Tabor itself, deserves some attention. He says that near the foot of the mountain, on the south-west, are "the springs of Ain el Sherrah, which send a perceptible stream through the centre of the plain of Esdraelon, and form the brook Kishon of antiquity." Farther on, on reaching the hills which divide the plain of Esdraelon from that of Acre, the same traveller saw the pass through which the stream makes its way from the one plain to the other. From the attention we have had occasion to pay to similar rivers, it does not seem to us difficult to reconcile these seemingly adverse statements. It will very probably be found, on further inquiry, that the remoter sources of the river are really in Mount Tabor; but that the supplies derived from this source dry up in summer when not augmented by rains or contributary torrents; whereas the copious supply from the nearer springs at Ras el Kishon, with other springs lower down, keep it up from that point as a perennial stream, even during the drought of summer. Thus, during one part of the year, the source of the full river will appear to be in Mount Tabor, while, during another part, the Ras el Kishon will be the source of the diminished stream.

The route across the plain has been little travelled in the season of rain; but evidence nevertheless exists of the presence of the stream from Tabor in that time of the year. Maieti mentions that an English dragoman and his horse were drowned in the attempt to cross such a stream in 1761. During the battle of Mount Tabor, between the French and Arabs (April 16, 1799), many of the latter were drowned in the attempt to cross a stream coming from the neighbourhood of Tabor, which then inundated the plain. In the same season of a later year, Monro found a stream 30 yards wide, and crossed it in a boat; Dr. Robinson, whose impression coincides with that which has been taken from these facts, even thinks that the stream from Tabor was formerly perennial, when the country was better wooded than at present.

Of the brooks which flow from the hills of Samaria, and pass to the sea across the plains which lie between Carmel and Joppa, the two named Zerka and Kanah are those only that require particular notice.

The Zerka, which must not be confounded with a far more important river of the same name beyond Jordan, seems to take its name from a village so called upon its banks: it falls into the sea about three miles north of the ruins of Cæsarea It is of course an inconsiderable brook, save in winter; and is chiefly remarkable for its supposed identity with the Crocodile River of Pliny. From its proximity to Cæsarea, there is good reason to conclude that this is the river that he intended to denote by the name. The Arabs in the neighbourhood positively affirm to travellers that crocodiles exist in this stream, but admit that they are of small size. As they do not appear to be found in any other river of Palestine, those travellers who have been induced by the correspondence between Pliny and the modern inhabitants to pay some attention to the subject, have been led to conclude that some large species of lizards have been taken for small crocodiles; while others, going further in their belief, think that there are real crocodiles, of degenerated growth, descended either from such as an Egyptian colony in this neighbourhood imported as sacred animals, or from such as might have been brought here, as to Rome, to be used in the zoological combats which were celebrated at Cæsarea in the time of the Herods and of the Roman procurators. But the proper seat of these crocodiles, according to most accounts, was a lake, with which this river communicated, and to which the Arabs gave the name of Moiet-el-Temsah, or the crocodile lake, which is exactly the name (*Crocodilorum Lacus*) given to it by the ancients. Buckingham and others remark, that they could not find this lake in the site assigned to it by D'Anville; but this does not prove that it does not (or at least did not) exist in a situation somewhat different from that which he assigns to it; for its name has descended to us from ancient times, and there are not wanting travellers who affirm that they have seen it. And in such cases, the affirmation of those who tell us that they have seen, is of more weight than the negation of those who tell us that they have not seen. Among those who describe the lake as having seen it, are Brocard, Breidanbach, Roger, and Surius, who were all something more than mere passing travellers. Roger describes it as a lake of soft water, about a league in circuit, deep, and abounding in fish; and as being formed by springs rising within itself. Both he and Surius relate an anecdote which seems to have made much noise in their time—that in the year 1628, a crocodile issued from among the reeds of the lake, of such size and strength that it was able to seize and carry off in its jaws an ass, dragging also a large stone to which the animal had been tied by the peasant to whom it belonged. Nau also affirms that calves have sometimes been carried off by the crocodiles of *the river*. One may suspect that the sins of other creatures have in these cases been imputed to the crocodiles; but with respect to the lake itself, the verity of the old geographers and travellers has been confirmed by the Rev. V. Monro, who observed it, and describes it as the Crocodile Lake of D'Anville, and the Moiet-el-Temsah of the Arabs. It is a small low-lying lake, overgrown with reeds, and abounding in fish. It is supplied by a stream running from the east. The latter was crossed by the traveller, half a mile beyond, near to where it issued from a small mere, by an artificial passage through a ridge of rock that still bears traces of a bridge or arch which once spanned the channel.

About twelve miles to the south of Cæsarea is the Nahr-el-Kasab, a brook of which we find nothing memorable save the probability of its being the "river Kanah" of Josh. xvi. 8, and xvii. 9.

About ten miles to the south of this, and nearly the same distance to the north of Joppa, is another small river, shallow, and easily forded, near its mouth, even in January. It is called Nahr-el-Arsouf, and is chiefly noted for a celebrated castle of the same name which stood near its mouth in the time of the Crusades.

A little before we reach Joppa, we cross the Nahr-Abi-Petros, over which there is a bridge, and on whose border the ancient city Lod, otherwise called Lydda and Diospolis, stood.

About twelve miles to the south of Joppa, the traveller reaches the Nahr-el-Rubin, which he usually crosses close to the remains of a Roman bridge, one great arch of which and part of another still remain, overgrown with bushes and weeds. The river above the bridge was nearly dry when crossed by Irby and Mangles in October, and filled with wild flowers and rushes. Below it these travellers noticed a handsome winding sheet of water, the banks of which were likewise covered with various water-flowers, and many black water-fowl were swimming on its surface. The water is bad, but not salt. It takes its present name from that of a celebrated sheik whose tomb stands on its northern bank.

Ten miles to the south of this, and about a mile and a half south of Ashdod, we cross a rivulet which appears to be the Scriptural brook Sorek. This identification results from the considerations and bearings which enable us to determine with tolerable accuracy the situation of Eleutheropolis, which Eusebius tells us was on the river Sorek: and the present rivulet is the only one that corresponds with these indications. The stream was crossed by Dr. Richardson (in April) on a broad stone bridge, and it then offered the appearance of the bed of a river with stagnant water in several places.

Between Askelon and Gaza are two small streams, concerning the history or names of which we have no information.

Between two and three miles to the south of Gaza is a rivulet called Wady Gaza, which seems to answer better than any other

* We have ourselves observed of such rivers in different countries, that the duration of the inundation is proportioned to the length of their course.

to the brook Besor of Scripture. This can scarcely be called a stream, being little more than the dry bed of a winter-torrent bearing marks of being occasionally swept over by a large volume of water. Early in April, Dr. Richardson found it a dry bed, about thirty yards wide. Below where he crossed there was stagnant water in several places; and the route lay through a fine alluvial plain, which, when there was water, seemed to be surrounded by the river.

Now, pursuant to the plan we proposed to ourselves, we proceed to notice the streams which tend towards the great valley of the Jordan, beginning with those which flow down the western slopes—that is, from the proper Land of Canaan. These are few, and of small note—the rather that the streams which contribute to the original formation of the Jordan, north of the Lake Huleh, have already been noticed. In fact, although between that lake and the end of the Dead Sea there are numerous brooks, each with its own name, there is hardly one among them of even sufficient Scriptural or historical interest to claim the notice to which it would not, from its physical importance, be entitled. The brook Kedron may be an exception; and to that our attention must be confined.

It derives its sole importance from the frequent allusions to it in the Sacred History, which necessarily resulted from its flowing through the deepest and most extensive of the natural valleys by which Jerusalem is confined. The ravine in which this stream is collected takes its origin above a mile to the north-east of the city. This ravine deepens as it proceeds, and forms an angle opposite the temple. It then takes a south-east direction, and, passing between the village of Siloam and the city, runs off in the direction of the Dead Sea. It is, as we have said, dry in summer, but even then its wide and stony bed bears witness that in winter, after heavy rains, it becomes a large and powerful torrent. The Kedron continues its way to the Asphaltic Lake through a singularly wild ravine, the course of which few travellers have traced. Of these are Madden and Stephens, who both passed through it, the one in going to and the other in coming from the Dead Sea. It is in this ravine that the celebrated monastery of Santa Saba is situated, of which we have already taken notice. Speaking of his approach to this monastery through this ravine, Mr. Madden says, "After traversing for the last hour a wild ravine formed by two rugged perpendicular mountains, the sides of which contained innumerable caverns, which once formed a sort of troglodyte city in which the early Christians resided, the tradition of this convent is, that 80,000 of them were massacred in this valley by the Saracens. The sight of the convent in this desolate place was like a glimpse of paradise." Leaving it next day, he gives no informing particulars of his farther route, save that he "marched through the bed of the Kedron, along the horrible ravine which he entered the day before." At length, he says, he got into the plain, his course over which led him to the top of the cliffs which bound the lake on the north-west. But he takes no further notice of the bed of the Kedron, which, it appears, approaches the lake in that quarter, where the mountains are very high and precipitous.

We will not quit the brook Kedron without some notice of the other waters of Jerusalem which its bed receives. And first of the "Fountain" and the "Pool of Siloam," whose surplus waters flow in a petty streamlet to that bed. Concerning these there has been some confusion through the indiscriminate application of names by different travellers, and the most lucid account we have met with is that with which the public has been furnished by Dr. Wilde,* of Dublin.

"The Fountain of Siloam, sometimes called the Upper Pool of Siloam, is situated in an indentation formed in the side of the hill, beneath the south-eastern angle of the city wall, and nearly opposite the place where the Tyropœan Valley separates the eastern sides of Mounts Zion and Moriah. It is entered by an arched vault, by which a flight of steps leads down to a low-vaulted passage cut in the solid rock, and which leads in a north-west direction beneath the site of the ancient temple. The often repeated, and, I might say the hackneyed quotation,—

> 'Siloa's brook that flow'd
> Fast by the Oracle of God,

has never, I think, been properly understood, because both this fountain and that called the pool of the same name are placed at a distance from the site of the temple. The following fact may illustrate and explain this quotation:—

"During the rebellion that I have already alluded to,* the Arabs of the opposite village (Siloam) gained access to the city by means of the conduit of this pool, which again rises to the surface within the mosque of Omar. Dr. Richardson *conjectured* that this subterraneous passage proceeded under the mountain, but heretofore no proof could be given of its doing so, nor was it known to travellers† that it communicated with the interior of the city. The passage is evidently the work of art. The water in it is generally about two feet deep, and a man may go through it in a stooping position." Dr. Wilde further supposes that this may have been used by the ancient inhabitants as a sallyport, or secret outlet from the temple, for he states, that it cannot have been made to conduct the water from the fountain *into* the city, inasmuch as it is lower than that point, and the stream flows *down* from it. If this be the case, it seems to us infinitely more likely that it was originally designed to carry off the surplus water which was brought from the fountain of Etham into the temple. Those who wish to pursue the inquiry will find much to confirm this, conjecture. Dr. Wilde informs us, that the fountain of Siloam is "a mineral spring, of a brackish taste, and somewhat of the smell of Harrogate water, but in a very slight degree.‡ It is said to possess considerable medicinal properties, and is much frequented by pilgrims. The remains of a church surround the vault at the top, and by the Latin fathers (and all Roman Catholic travellers) it is called the Fountain of the Blessed Virgin, from the supposition that she washed the linen of our Lord § in its sacred waters.

"Continuing our course around the probable line of the ancient walls, along the gentle slope of Zion, we pass by the king's gardens, and arrive at the lower pool of Siloam placed in another indentation of the wall, at the southern extremity of Zion. It is a deep square cistern, lined with masonry, adorned with columns at the sides, and having a flight of steps leading to the bottom, in which there were about two feet of water. It communicates by a subterraneous passage with the fountain just described, from which it is distant about six hundred yards. The water enters the pool by a low-arched passage, into which the pilgrims, numbers of whom are generally to be found around it, put their heads as part of the ceremony, and wash their clothes in the purifying stream that issues from it.

"A very remarkable circumstance is related of this pool and fountain:—It is reported, that the water in them is subject to a daily tide, and by some writers it is stated to ebb and flow under lunar influence. I must confess that in my first visits to the place, I was much astonished, for not only did I see the mark to which the recently-fallen water had risen, but I also perceived that its height was greater at different times of the same day. Many ingenious hypotheses, and many learned arguments have been adduced to account for this extraordinary phenomenon—the wonder and admiration of the pilgrim and traveller. I think, however, that it may thus be accounted for. The stream or outlet from the lower pool is conducted by artificial channels through the gardens and parterres that lie immediately beneath it in the valley; and it is the chief source of their fertility; for as they are mostly formed of earth which has been carried from other places, they possess no original or natural soil capable of supporting vegetation. Now, immediately on the water-course leaving the pool, it is divided into numbers of little aqueducts for the purpose of irrigating these different plots: but as there is but little water in the pool during the dry season, the Arabs dam up the several streams, in order to collect a sufficient quantity in small ponds adjoining each garden; and this they must all do at the same time, or there would be an unfair division of the fertilising fluid. These dams are generally made in the evening, and the water is drawn off in the morning, or sometimes two or three times a day; and thus the reflux of the water that they hold gives the appearance of an ebb and flow.

* 'Narrative of a Voyage to Madeira, Teneriffe, and along the shores of the Mediterranean,' &c. By W. R. Wilde, M.R.I.A. Dublin, 1840.

* This was an outbreak in Jerusalem, in which the Arabs inhabiting the village of Siloam were the ringleaders.

† Perhaps not to *modern* travellers; but Dr. W. might read Quaresmius, lib. iv. pereg. vii. cap. 28 ('*De fonte B. Mariæ Virginis*'). In the two preceding chapters, respecting the lower pool (*De Origine et Terminatione Fontis Siloë*), some valuable matter, *new* because *old*, might also be found.

‡ "I brought home a jar of this water, and am informed by Professor Kane, who has analysed it, that it is a strongly saline and sulphureous spring, whose specific gravity is 1003·5; that it contains much common salt, some carbonate and sulphate of lime, a trace of muriate of magnesia, together with a quantity of sulphuretted hydrogen gas."—This seems rather a loose way of stating the results of an analysis.

§ "*And her own.*" Nau reports, but with his usual good sense adds to his report of the tradition, "C'est ce qu'on en dit, mais je ne sçay pas d'où on l'a appris." In his time the fountain was highly reverenced (as it still is) by the Moslems, and Christians were obliged to pay for permission to descend, and Jews were altogether excluded.

"The surplus water is finally collected into a small stream that joins the brook Gihon, near its junction with the Kedron, but both these latter streams were dry during our visit."

This lower pool of Siloam has been generally regarded as that in which, by our Saviour's direction, the man born blind went and washed, and returned with the blessing of sight. (John ix. 7.) It has also been identified with the En-rogel, or Fuller's Fountain (literally Foot Fountain), mentioned in Josh. xv. 7, xviii. 16, and 2 Sam. xvii. 17; and this with more likelihood than the reference which some others make to the upper fountain. But the point is uncertain, and not of much importance. Nau points to a fountain below the village of Siloam, on the other side of the valley, which he thinks agrees more than either of them with the Scriptural intimations which refer to En-rogel. It was from the *fountain* as distinguished from the *pool* of Siloam* that the Jews were wont to draw water in a golden vessel, at the feast of tabernacles, and bear it with great ceremony to the temple, where it was poured out as a libation at the altar.†

The stream of Gihon, mentioned as falling into the Kedron at the angle where the eastern and southern valleys meet, is connected with one, or rather two, of the numerous reservoirs prepared by the early sovereigns of Judah for supplying Jerusalem with water. The reservoirs now in question are in the western valley, called the Valley of Gihon, whence they are named the Upper and Lower Pools of Gihon. The "Upper," being the northernmost, is nearly opposite the gate of Bethlehem, and the road to Jaffa passes close by it. It is a large basin, not, as Pococke describes, "cut down about ten feet into the rock," but by running a strong wall across the ravine, walling the sides and covering them with a water-proof cement. As travellers note that it is always dry or almost dry except in or after the season of rain, it seems designed to receive the waters which come down from the neighbouring hills. From this pool to the city there is a canal, which is uncovered part of the way, and which is said to go to the pool which is inside the Bethlehem gate, in the street near the Holy Sepulchre. This canal was obviously intended to conduct a portion of the surplus waters from the outer pool to that within the city; for the design of all the pools appears to have been to collect the rain-water for the common uses of the city, and even for drink in case of need.

About a mile‡ below this, in the valley, below Mount Zion, is another much larger reservoir, designed apparently not only to collect the intermediate waters of the valley, but to share the surplus water of the upper pool. It is made like the other by building a wall across the valley. The basin is about 250 paces long by 100 broad; and the bottom is very narrow, as the sides shelve downward like steps. The basin is supplied by no natural springs, and is now dry except after rains. The surplus water from this pool, as well as that collected below it, passes off by the southern valley and falls into the Kedron. Tradition ascribes the credit of these pools to Solomon, as it does all similar works in the land. But it seems better to regard this lower pool at least as the work of Hezekiah, who is said to have "*stopped* the upper water-course of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David;" which seems correctly to describe the situation of the lower pool, and the mode of its formation. The *upper* pool, and the communication between it and the city, may have previously existed; and it appears to have been in or near the spot that Solomon was anointed king by order of his father, while Adonijah was holding his royal feast at En-rogel, in the opposite valley.§ The pool is not named, and indeed perhaps did not *then* exist. And the name Gihon, which alone is given, may have denoted a natural spring or a well, for that it was a *water*, seems to be shown by the fact of the intended opposition to Adonijah, who was at *the well* of Rogel.

There are few towns, and scarcely any metropolitan town, in which the natural supply of water is so inadequate as in Jerusalem; hence the elaborate contrivances to collect and preserve the precious fluid, or to bring it to the town. And as we shall find no more suitable place than the present, we here take such notice of the works undertaken with this view, as its historical importance seems to require.

* This is shown by Lightfoot from the Jewish writers. See Chorog. Cent. chap. xxv.

† The Jewish writers suppose the passage, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Isa. xii. 3), to refer to this custom. And with more likelihood, seeing the *time* is distinctly indicated, it is supposed that Christ was actually witnessing this ceremony, when "*On the last day, that great day of* the feast [of tabernacles], Jesus stood and cried, saying, 'If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink,'" &c.

‡ Course distance; the direct distance is little more than half this.

§ 1 Kings i. 33.

Of the reservoirs within the town, the only one which need engage our attention is that which is identified as the Scriptural pool of Bethesda, as a description of which we cannot do better than transcribe the account given by Dr. Wilde:—

"The place called Bethesda is an immense deep oblong excavation or cistern, somewhat similar to the pools of Solomon near Bethlehem. It is situated to the south of St. Stephen's, or the sheep-gate, immediately beneath the wall of Omar's mosque, and beside the antique cyclopean masonry that I noticed before in this locality. It is about two hundred and fifty feet long and thirty feet deep: but now dry, and partly filled with dirt, rubbish, and brambles. The walls that form its sides are so curiously constructed that they demand attention. They are of immense thickness, and formed of several upright layers of masonry. The first, or that most distant from the inner side of the pool, is formed of large and perfectly square masses of stone laid in courses, but separated from each other by a band of intervening smaller stones in the shape of long bricks, placed with their ends out, and projecting from six to eight inches beyond the plane of the larger ones; so that they thus formed a kind of reticulated work. The square space left in the centre of each band of projecting stones is again filled up by others still smaller; and the central stone of this part is fitted into a square groove or notch cut about three or four inches deep in the original large blocks with the greatest nicety, and the whole joined together by strong cement. Over this is placed a firm coating of mortar, a couple of inches thick, and studded on its surface with small flat flints, and bits of marble; and, last of all, it was completely covered with a layer of strong cement of a whitish colour. The walls have been much dilapidated in several places, and I had an opportunity of examining them carefully. This work is best seen on the southern side of the excavation, where it lies beneath some ruined houses. In the western end the remains of three arches are still in existence; but the third is at present nearly choked up with the *débris* of old and ruined houses. These arches appear to have been formed as an entrance for the water, which was probably conveyed to them from the Bethlehem aqueduct." Strong grounds have since been produced by Dr. Robinson, for the suspicion, that this alleged pool of Bethesda was in fact part of the deep fosse on that side of the temple; but it will doubtless long continue to retain the name it now bears.

The *site* of the famous "Pools of Solomon," on the road to Bethlehem, has been noticed in p. 459, and on account of their connection by aqueducts with Jerusalem, the *pools* themselves cannot be more suitably noticed than in this place.

It will be remembered that the narrow and fertile valley in which they are found is supposed to be the site of one of the undertakings of Solomon, of which he speaks in Eccles. ii. 5, 6,* and to be that, in particular, to which there are allusions in the Canticles. It is also, with reason, conceived to be the place noticed by Josephus, who, when writing of Solomon, states:—"There was, about fifty furlongs distant from Jerusalem, a certain place called Etham, very pleasant in fine gardens, and abounding in rivulets of water; thither he was wont to go forth in the morning, sitting on high in his chariot." (Antiq. viii. 7.)

The description of these pools which Dr. Wilde has furnished is so distinct and fresh, that we shall here introduce it:—

"At the extremity of the valley, we arrived at the three enormous tanks, sunk in the side of a sloping ground, and which, from time immemorial, have been considered to be the workmanship of Solomon; and certainly they are well worthy the man to whom tradition has assigned their construction. These reservoirs are each upon a distinct level, one above the other, and are capable of holding an immense body of water. They are so constructed, both by conduits leading directly from one to another, and by what may be termed anastomosing branches, that when the water in the upper one has reached to a certain height, the surplus flows off into the one below it, and so on into the third. These passages were obstructed, and the whole of the cisterns were out of repair, when we visited them, so that there was hardly any water in the lowest, while the upper one was nearly full of good pure water. Small aqueducts lead from each of these cisterns to a main one that conducts the water to Jerusalem. They are all lined with a thick layer of hard whitish cement, and a flight of steps leads to the bottom of each, similar to some of those in the holy city. Where the lowest cistern joins the valley of Etham, it is formed by an embankment of earth, and has a sluice to draw off the water occasionally. A short distance from

* "I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits; I made me *pools of water*, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees."

the upper pool, I descended into a narrow stone chamber, through which the water passes from the neighbouring spring on its course to the cisterns. This likewise has a traditionary tale to tell. It is said to be the sealed fountain to which allusion is made in the fourth and fifth chapter of the Canticles. From an examination of this place, it appeared to me that several springs empty themselves into these reservoirs, which are partly cut out of the solid rock, and partly built with masonry.

"Nigh to the upper pool there is a large square castle, apparently of an order of architecture belonging to the Christian era; and, in all probability, so placed to guard these water-works during the period of the Holy War, for we know to what extremities some of the early Crusaders were reduced from the different wells being poisoned by the enemy upon their approach to Jerusalem.

"These fountains having been already described by Maundrell, Pococke, and others, I shall not dwell longer upon them, except to mention two circumstances, that it appears extraordinary have not been adverted to by former travellers; the first is, their great similarity to the fountains assigned to Solomon at Ras-el-Ain, near Tyre;* and the fact of both being natural springs, that were pent up so as to raise the water they contained to the level of its final destination. The second is, that these springs were originally collected into one stream, which must then have formed a considerable rivulet, and, running through this valley, finally discharged its waters into the Asphaltine Lake.

"It was beside these water-works that Ibrahim Pasha suffered a defeat by the Arabs some years ago, when he made a sudden *sortie* from Jerusalem and attacked the rebels there, but their numbers more than doubled his. A garrison of five cavalry soldiers was stationed in the old castle.

"On our return to the city, we followed the track of the aqueduct as far as Bethlehem, and afterwards crossed it in several places on the road. It is very small, but the water runs in it with considerable rapidity, as we could perceive by the open places left in it here and there. From the very tortuous course that this conduit takes in following the different sinuosities of the ground, being sometimes above and sometimes beneath the surface, it is difficult to persuade one's self that it does not run up hill, as many have supposed. Finally, it crosses over the valley of Rephaim, on a series of arches to the north of the lower pool of Gihon, and winding round the southern horn of Zion, is lost to view in the ruins of the city. It very probably supplied the pool of Bethesda, after having traversed a course of certainly not less than from thirteen to fifteen miles."

We now turn our attention to the rivers which fall into the basin of the Jordan from the country east of that river, beginning in the north.

The first of these in the river JARMOUK, a name which the Greeks softened into Hieromax, and which is now called by the Arabs Sheirat-el-Mandhour, from a celebrated chief named Mandhour, who is said once to have governed the whole of the tract of country through which the stream runs, from its source at Mezareib to its outlet into the Jordan, near the southern extremity of the lake of Tiberias. At the place—the supposed site of Ashtaroth Carnaim—to which the source of the river is thus ascribed, the stream issues from a lake about a mile in circumference. This lake has a small grass-covered islet in the centre, and an abundance of fish in its waters, equal in size and not inferior in beauty to the gold and silver fishes which we keep in glass globes. The water is sweet and transparent, and the lake never dries. The stream which issues from hence flows in a westerly direction, with few windings, till it empties itself, at the point already indicated, into the Jordan, which is considered to be fifteen hours distant from the lake in a W.S.W. direction. On another occasion, Mr. Buckingham, to whom we owe our information, heard the source of the river described as being three days' journey from its mouth, in the direction of Bozra at a place called Shellal; but whether implying thereby a cataract or rapids, as that word does on the Nile, he could not clearly understand. The fact is, that the various streams which contribute to form the river Jarmouk sweep a wide tract of country to the east and north-east of its estuary; and as many of these have a far more remote source than that which comes from the lake at Mezareib, it is difficult to understand why this should preferably be considered the source of the river, unless that it is the most remarkable and the best known. It is likely, however, although we have no assurance of it, that these remoter streams are dry in the summer, and that the only perennial stream is that which issues from the lake, in which case its claim to be regarded as the source of the river may be admitted. But nothing is in general more difficult than to assign their true sources to rivers obscurely known; and as it is a matter of little interest, except to scientific inquirers, it is only under peculiar circumstances that we have allowed it to engage our attention.

The body of water which the river Jarmouk contributes to the Jordan is very considerable. Indeed, at the point (a little above the estuary) where it was crossed by Mr. Buckingham, early in February, he found it not fordable without difficulty, as the stream was there broader, deeper, and more rapid, than the Jordan at the time (a fortnight before) and place of his crossing that river, above Jericho.*

The river JABBOK now bears the name of Zerka. Its waters first collect in the south of Jebel Haouran. In crossing westward, across the dry plain, to enter the Belka, it more than once takes its course under ground, and is quite dry in the summer; but after it has passed the plain, the contributions it receives make it a perennial stream, although in summer much attenuated. At the point where it enters the hilly region is the Kalaut-ez-Zerka, or castle of Zerka, which is one of the stations of the Syrian pilgrims' caravan. At this place "it is but a sorry rivulet embedded among reeds, but its waters are clear and well tasted."† At a point about midway between this place and the mouth of the river, where it was crossed by Buckingham, its course lies between tall and abrupt cliffs, about 500 feet high, which look as if separated by some convulsion of nature to give it passage. It is in fact a deep ravine in a plain, the dark sides of which are in general destitute of verdure, while the plain at the top, on both sides, is covered with a light red soil, and bears marks of high fertility. At the bottom of the ravine we find a small river flowing from the eastward, and which appears here to have just made a sharp bend from the northward, and from this point to go nearly west to discharge itself into the Jordan. "The banks of the stream were so thickly wooded with oleander

* "We visited the cisterns of Solomon, at Ras-el-Ain, which, tradition says, he erected in return for the assistance afforded by King Hiram in building the temple. There are two sets of these cisterns: the first we came to were small, and in ruins, and one evidently of a later date than the second. Their decayed state allowed us to examine the mode in which they were constructed, in order to raise the body of water to the required level. This water now finds its way direct to the sea, turning a mill in its course. No doubt can exist, I think, but that both these and the larger ones are natural springs, which, by being enclosed in those waterproof walls, raised the water to the height necessary for conducting it to the city. To suppose them, as has been asserted, supplied by a river having a higher source in the adjacent mountains, is unreasonable; for, had such been the case, why not conduct it from the highest point at once, instead of bringing it into a valley, in which both of these cisterns are situated? The larger cisterns are about half a mile farther on to the south; the ground which intervenes between them and the lesser ones is highly fertile, and was covered with green corn and large groves of mulberry-trees—silk still forming a considerable article of commerce here. These fountains are three in number, and one about thirty feet high, they are situated in a small valley, about a quarter of a mile from the sea; and though they are much broken and neglected, yet they retain sufficient magnificence to attest their antiquity and former beauty. The largest is an octagon, and is about a hundred yards nearer to the sea than the others, to which it is joined by some very beautiful arches. A row of steps leads to the top, which is surrounded by a walk eight feet broad. Either it was originally arched over, or the lining is much worn away, as the top projects like a cornice. The aperture is twenty-two yards across, and on fathoming it I found the depth not more than eleven yards in the centre, and about two at the edges; but its depth has probably been diminished by rubbish, &c., which from time to time it must have received. Indeed, one only wonders how these cisterns have at all stood amidst the many desolations that have visited this unhappy country. They are always full, and an immense body of water flows from them, which also turns several mills in its course.

"I measured the thickness of the wall of the smallest fountain, and found it to be twenty-three feet. It was formed in this way—two walls of hewn stones, each from five to six feet long, enclosed a space which was filled up with a cement, consisting of lime, broken stones, and gravel. On the inner wall was a lining of mortar studded with small stones, similar to that on the fountains of Solomon, near Bethlehem, and to that on the pool of Bethesda, at Jerusalem.

"The water has been drawn from the aqueduct to supply the mills, and Ibrahim Basha was then erecting a Tabouch manufactory nigh to the cisterns. Besides the large quantity of water constantly passing off in the regular stream, it flows over the side of the cistern in one place, and forms a handsome cascade. Stalactites, like those on the arches in the plain, are seen here in immense masses, and some Doric capitals have been lately dug up at this place; and an aqueduct runs from it in a southward direction, which was used probably for the purposes of irrigation. The main aqueduct is continued northward to the rock, or citadel, and is supported by arches at one place only. On the morning of our visit, some Arab women were baking their bread, made by pouring batter upon the heated pan, a practice much referred to in the Book of Samuel. The existence of these fountains prior to the time of Alexander has been called in question by a learned writer; but no stronger proof is needed of their having been constructed previous to the building of Insular Tyre than that which is furnished by the aqueduct running direct to the rock, and afterwards turning backwards to the island, to which it could have been brought in half the distance and with much less obstruction, from the irregularities of the ground. Beyond these fountains is an extensive plain, bounded by the lower range of Lebanon."

* Buckingham's 'Arab Tribes,' 163; 'Palestine,' ii. 297, 306.

† Robinson, ii. 171. This was in November.

and plane-trees, wild-olives, and wild-almonds in blossom, pink and white sickleyman-flowers, and others, the names of which were unknown to us, with tall and waving reeds, at least fifteen feet in height, that we could not perceive the waters through them from above, though the presence of these luxuriant borders marked the windings of its course, and the murmur of its flow was echoed through its long deep channel, so as to be heard distinctly from afar. On this [the northern] side of the stream, at the spot where we forded it, is a piece of wall, solidly built upon the inclined slope, constructed in an uniform manner, though of small stones, and apparently finished at the end which was toward the river, so that it never could have been carried across, as we at first supposed, either for a bridge or to close the pass. This was called by the Arabs, *Shughl beni-Israel*, or the Work of the Sons of Israel; but they knew of no other traditions regarding it. The river where we crossed it, at this point, was not more than ten yards wide, but it was deeper than the Jordan and nearly as rapid, so that we had some difficulty in fording it. As it ran in a rocky bed, its waters were clear, and we found their taste agreeable."*

We know not that the river has been crossed lower down than this by any traveller besides Burckhardt, from whose brief indication it appears still to flow in a deep valley, through banks overgrown with the *solanum furiosum*. As might be expected in the beginning of July, he found it "a small river;" but must, even on his own showing, be under some mistake in saying that it "empties itself into the Jordan about an hour and a half from the spot where it issues from the mountain."†

The Arnon, which, after the Jordan, is more frequently than any other river of the land named in the historical and prophetical Scriptures, now bears the name of *Wady Modjeb*, and was pre-eminently the river of Moab, on which Aroer, one of the principal cities of that nation, was situated. It enters the Dead Sea, and is principally formed by the confluence of three streams (Wady Wale, Bahr Ledjoum, and Seyle Sayde), all of which have their origin in the remoter hills beyond that lake, which overlook the eastern wilderness. Burckhardt crossed it in July, about twenty miles from its mouth. It has been more rarely visited than the other streams; and the account rendered by Burckhardt is still the only good one we possess. It seems to exhibit many of the same characteristics as the Jabbok.

"The view which the Modjeb presents is very striking. From the bottom, where the river runs through a narrow strip of verdant level, about forty yards across, the steep and barren banks rise to a great height, covered with immense blocks of stone which have rolled down from the upper strata, so that, when viewed from above, the valley looks like a deep chasm, formed by some tremendous convulsion of the earth, into which there seems no possibility of descending to the bottom. The distance from the edge of one precipice to that of the opposite one is about two miles in a straight line. We descended the northern bank of the Wady by a footpath which winds among the broken masses of rock, dismounting on account of the steepness of the road. . . . . There are three fords across the Modjeb, of which we took that the most frequented. I had never felt such suffocating heat as I experienced in this valley, from the concentrated rays of the sun and their reflection from the rocks. We were thirty-five minutes in reaching the bottom. The river, which flows in a rocky bed, was almost dried up (in July); but its bed bears evident marks of its impetuosity during the rainy season; the shattered fragments of large pieces of rock which had been broken from the banks nearest the river, and carried along by the torrent, being deposited at a considerable height above the present channel of the stream. A few defle and willow trees grow on its banks."*

Of the smaller lakes, or rather pools, to be found in the country, some have been incidentally noticed, and the rest are of too little consequence to require notice in this work. Mr. Monro indeed mentions, that on approaching the plain of Esdraelon, near the hill on which stands the castle of Sanhoor,† he saw "a lake about six miles long by three in width, which had been formed within a short time, from some unknown cause. The tract of land over which it had spread was arable, and in many places the tops of the corn were visible above the water. The muleteers, though in the habit of travelling upon that route, had never seen it before, and one of them could not be persuaded that it was water, until he had approached close to the brink, but believed it to be the illusion of the *mirage*, which having seen in the desert, he supposed might exist there also." Lest the lake thus described should find a place in maps, we may mention that it has been noticed by no subsequent traveller who has pursued the same route; and that the appearance witnessed was probably no other than a temporary inundation, caused by recent heavy rains, which the heat of the ensuing summer soon evaporated. Large tracts in and bordering on the plain of Esdraelon, as well as on the plain of the coast, are thus laid under water in the wet season.

* Buckingham's 'Palestine,' ii. 109; see also Lindsay, ii. 123.

† Burckhardt, 347.

* Burckhardt, 372-3.

† See before, p. 456.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

(¹) The Name of the Jordan, p. 473.—Various have been the etymologies assigned to the name of this river. It happened that a party of the tribe of Dan established themselves near one of the apparent sources of the Jordan, and gave the name of Dan to the conquered town of Laish. Hence the etymologists have rarely been able to get rid of the notion that the last member of the name *Jordan* must be in some way referred to the tribe of *Dan*. The explanation which ascribes the name to the union of two streams, respectively called *Jor* and *Dan*, to form the river and the name of *Jordan*, is so pretty that it deserves to be correct. This explanation, as applied, assumes that of these two streams the Dan was that which arose near the city of that name; but the only *fact* bearing on this point which we have been able to find (adduced in the text) would rather ascribe the name of *Jor* to *this* stream, and of *Dan* to *the other*. But as the tribe of Dan certainly occupied the territory in which *both* streams rise, this fact would not disprove the etymology, as the name *might* be derived from the tribe if not from the town. Besides, the two sources thus denominated are so near each other, as to make the distinction of little importance, since both must have been near the city of Dan.

Another etymology, however, derives the name from the words יאר, *jor*, and דן, *dan*, that is *the river Dan*, the former being an Egyptian word adopted by the Hebrews to denote a river or brook, and especially the Nile and its branches. Of those who adopt this interpretation, some have the דן as a proper name, supposing it derived from the tribe of Dan; while others regard it as an appellative, and finding that Dan may mean *pleasure*, translate the name, *River of pleasure*. But the word may also mean *deep, profound*; and hence others will have the name to signify *the deep river*, a distinction sufficiently applicable to it, by a comparative reference to the other rivers of the country.

But another class of interpreters, observing that the river is called *Jordan* long before the tribe of Dan, or even the founder of that tribe, existed, and feeling an objection to the supposition that in the Book of Genesis this name is proleptically assigned to the river, think it the better course to derive the name from the word ירד, *jarad*, "to flow down," that is, "swiftly," and suppose the river to have been thus named with reference to the rapidity of its course.

Our own opinion is, that the second member of the name, *dan*, does not at all refer to the tribe of that name; for, of all things, rivers most usually retain the names they originally received, and it was not likely that the Hebrews, so late as the time of the judges, gave a new name to a principal river which must have had a well-known and recognized name for ages. We therefore believe that Jordan was its actual name in the time of Abraham. But although inclining to the interpretation which derives the name from the verb ירד, we do not feel quite decided against those other interpretations which equally exclude the reference to the word *dan* as a proper name. Indeed it might be strongly argued in favour of the *Jor* being understood in the sense of *river*, that the phrase "*the river* Jordan" never occurs in the Bible—it is always "the Jordan." But it may be added that the corresponding word ܝܐܪ occurs in Syriac in the sense of *a sea, a water*. Thus in excluding all reference to the tribe of Dan, we are far from being at any loss for an etymology of the word Jor*dan*.

(²) The Stade, p. 475.—We shall be unable in this place to develop our views on this subject to the extent we once intended. The remarks we may offer may be well introduced by the following, from the Introduction to Major Rennell's 'Comparative Geography of Western Asia.'

"Of these (stades) there were both Greek and Roman. It was originally a Grecian measure; but afterwards applied by the Romans to the subdivision of their mile, which consisted of eight stades. Hence a degree consisted of 600 Roman stades only; although Strabo, following the Greeks, reckoned 700, and the mean of the different authorities among the Greeks 718; in the Euxine, taken around its whole circuit, about 708. These are the Grecian *itinerary* stades, and had

no reference to the Olympic, which never appears to have been used for itinerary purposes.

"*When Polybius, Strabo, or Pliny are speaking after the Greeks, or treating of Grecian matters, antecedent to their times, they always used the Grecian itinerary stade; but in what concerns Roman matters alone, the Roman stade.* Strabo, when following the route of Alexander, gives of course the identical *number* of stades, as well as the *quality*, which he found in the annals of the times; and, moreover, gives the distance according to the number of stades *actually marched over*: so that, after all, it was necessary, in order to obtain the direct distance, to deduct the proportion of *winding* of the road.

"Pliny gives those distances almost universally in Roman miles, in order, it may be supposed, to render the account more intelligible to his countrymen. It will be found that he turned the sums of Grecian stades into M P. by dividing by eight, which has the effect of increasing the distance, since it required nine and a half Grecian stades to make a Roman mile. However, this will be found to be true, by those who compare the distances in M P. in Pliny, with the stades in Strabo."

Now this process is, we believe, that which has been applied with exaggerated effect to the measurements of Josephus; so that his dimensions and distances, as reported to the English reader, are much larger than he intended them to be. Such mere Roman writers as Pliny found it convenient to consider the Grecian stade equivalent to the eighth part of their mile, or their furlong, although nine and a half stades would be strictly required for that mile; and our own writers, imitating in this the Romans, have translated the *stade* into *furlong* with still worse effect, seeing that our mile is so much longer than the Roman (which had seventy-five miles to the degree, whereas ours has sixty-nine and a half), that about ten and a quarter stades would be required to fill it out. The disproportion between the stade and the English "furlong," into which it is so usually rendered, will appear still greater when it is reflected that distances were usually stated by the ancients according to the road, although an English reader is apt to think of direct distances. The difference thus resulting is such, that it is considered the Roman mile of seventy-five to a degree becomes eighty-four to the degree, when allowance is made for the windings of the roads, to use the measurement in geographical construction.

Now we consider, that when all these circumstances are taken into account, and applied to interpret the measures of Josephus, it will be found in most instances remarkably accurate, instead of being too large, as is usually considered. We have no doubt that, writing in Greek, and of affairs in which the Romans were only ultimately and partially concerned, his stade was the same as that of the Greek writers, and, as above, of Polybius, Strabo, and Pliny, when speaking after the Greeks or of Grecian affairs, and that, consequently, instead of rendering his *stade* into *furlong*, of which we have eight to our mile, we should consider that there were at least *ten* of his stades to our mile. The propriety of *thus* reducing his measurements into British miles is shown by the frequently very exact correspondence between them, as thus understood, and those which some modern travellers have furnished. We are content to have pointed out a subject of inquiry which to some of our readers may be interesting.

In the ninth volume of the 'Geographical Journal,' there is a paper 'On the Stade, as a Linear Measure,' by Colonel Leake. It contains a large mass of valuable information on the subject; but we have not ourselves resorted to it, as the conclusion of Major Rennel and other great geographers is more satisfactory to us than that which would bring the stade to a uniform standard.

(3) WATER OF THE DEAD SEA, p. 483.—We cannot forbear subjoining in a note the lively account which Mr. Stephens gives of his experience on this point:—

"From my own experience I can almost corroborate the most extravagant accounts of the ancients. I know, in reference to my own specific gravity, that in the Atlantic and Mediterranean I cannot float without some little movement of the hands, and even then my body is almost totally submerged; but here, when I threw myself upon my back, my body was half out of the water. It was an exertion even for my lank Arabs to keep themselves under. When I struck out in swimming it was extremely awkward, for my legs were continually rising to the surface, and even above the water. I could have lain and read there with perfect ease. In fact, I could have slept; and it would have been a much easier bed than the bushes at Jericho. It was ludicrous to see one of the horses: as soon as his body touched the water, he was afloat, and turned over on his side: he struggled with all his force to preserve his equilibrium; but the moment he ceased moving, he turned over on his side again, and almost on his back, kicking his feet out of water and snorting with terror. The worst of my bath was, after it was over, my skin was covered with a thick glutinous substance, which it required another ablution to get rid of; and after I had wiped myself dry, my body burnt and smarted as if it had been turned round before a roasting fire. My face and ears were encrusted with salt; my hairs stood out, 'each particular hair on end,' and my eyes were irritated and inflamed, so that I felt the effects of it for several days. In spite of all this, however, revived and refreshed by my bath, I mounted my horse a new man."

(4) THE DEAD SEA, p. 486.—Two travellers—one an American, Lieut. Lynch, who visited Palestine in 1848-9; the other M. de Saulcy, a Frenchman, who was there in 1850-'1—have added much to our previous knowledge of the locality of the Dead Sea. The Lieutenant commanded an expedition sent out by the government of the United States, for the special purpose of navigating that sea; for which purpose two metallic boats were constructed, one of copper, the other of galvanized iron, which could be taken to pieces, and conveyed, any distance, overland; and could be impelled either by oar or sail. The American party was accompanied to the sea by two Arab chiefs, and ten Arabs well armed. The boats were launched on the Sea of Galilee, and they descended the Jordan to the Dead Sea. The navigation of the river was found to be interrupted by rapids, and the course to be so tortuous, that it ran at least two hundred miles, though the distance, measured in a straight line, is not more than sixty. The boats entered the Dead Sea on the 18th of April, and encountered a storm, which Lieutenant Lynch thus describes:—"A fresh north-west wind was blowing as we rounded the point. We endeavoured to steer a little to the north of west to make a true west course, and threw the patent log overboard, to measure the distance; but the wind rose so rapidly, that the boats could not keep head to wind, and we were obliged to haul the log in. The sea continued to rise with the increasing wind, which gradually freshened to a gale, and presented an agitated surface of foaming brine; the spray, evaporating as it fell, left incrustations of salt upon our clothes, our hands, and our faces; and while it conveyed a prickly sensation wherever it touched the skin, was, above all, extremely painful to the eyes. The boats, heavily laden, struggled sluggishly at first; but when the wind freshened in its fierceness, from the density of the water, it seemed as if their bows were encountering the sledge-hammers of the Titans, instead of the opposing waves of an angry sea." The gale increased, and, writes the Lieutenant, "I began to fear both boats would founder. But, although the sea had assumed a threatening aspect, and the fretted mountains, sharp and incinerated, looked terrific on either side, and salt and ashes mingled with its sands, and fœtid sulphurous springs trickled down its ravines, we did not despair: awe-struck, but not terrified,—fearing the worst, yet hoping for the best,—we prepared to spend a dreary night, upon the dreariest waste we had ever seen. At 5.58 the wind instantaneously abated, and, with it, the sea as rapidly fell; the water, from its ponderous quality, settling as soon as the agitating cause had ceased to act. Within twenty minutes from the time we bore away from a sea which threatened to engulph us, we were pulling away, at a rapid rate, over a placid sheet of water, that scarcely rippled beneath us."—Lieutenant Lynch thus describes the scene which the lake and its shores presented:—"The northern shore is an extensive mud-flat, with a sandy plain beyond, and is the very type of desolation; branches and trunks of trees lay scattered in every direction; some charred and blackened as by fire; others white, with an incrustation of salt. These were collected at high-water-mark, designating the line which the water had reached prior to our arrival. The north-western shore is an unmixed bed of gravel, coming in a gradual slope from the mountain to the sea. The eastern coast is a rugged line of mountains, bare of all vegetation—a continuation of the Haouran range, coming from the north, and extending south beyond the scope of vision, throwing out three marked and seemingly equi-distant promontories, from its south-eastern extremity."—From the observations of this party, the dimensions of the lake appeared to be about forty geographical miles in length, from north to south, with an average width of nine or ten; and it was ascertained that the bottom consists of two distinct plains, one, north of the promontory, averaging one thousand three hundred feet from the surface; the other, to the south, not more than thirteen. The bed appeared to be, for the most part, of blue mud, mixed with rectangular crystals of salt. No traces of organic life—not the slightest—could be found in the water.—A party travelled along the west shore of the lake, starting from the Jordan, at the north. After leaving the green banks of that river, "they passed over a sandy tract of damp ravines, where it was difficult for the camels to march without slipping. Ascending a slight elevation, they traversed a plain encrusted with salt, and sparsely covered with sour and saline bushes, some dead and withered, and snapping at the slightest touch given them in passing. They noticed many cavernous excavations in the hill-side—the dwelling places of the Israelites, of the early Christians, and of hermits, during the Crusades." * * * "The scene was one of unmixed desolation. The air, tainted with the sulphuretted hydrogen of the stream, gave a tawny hue even to the foliage of the cane, which is elsewhere of so light a green. Except the cane-bushes clustering along the marshy stream, which disfigured, while it sustained them, there was no vegetation whatever; barren mountains, fragments of rocks, blackened by sulphurous deposit, and an unnatural sea, with low, dead trees upon its margin, all within the scope of vision, bore a sad and sombre aspect. We had never before beheld such desolate hills." Near where the brook Kedron discharges itself into the sea, "the mountain-sides and summits, and the shores of the sea," we are told, "were almost entirely devoid of vegetation." One solitary tree "alone refreshed the eye; while all else, within the scope of vision, was dreary and utter desolation. The curse of God is surely upon this unhallowed sea."

M. de Saulcy did not embark upon the Dead Sea; but he very nearly completed the circuit of it. He does not describe the aspect of the scenery so utterly desolate as it is represented by Lieutenant Lynch. When he and his companions first saw it, it was from the summit of a mountain on the western coast. From that elevation, he says, "this strange sea, which all writers describe as presenting a most dismal aspect, appeared to us like a splendid lake, glittering in the sunshine,

with its blue waves gently breaking on the sands of the softest beach. Through the transparent water appeared a white tint, which enlivened the shore. We guessed at once, that this appearance was owing to the salt crystallised under the water; and, when near, we find that our conjecture is right. Are we now to be convinced, that no living thing can live on the shores of the Dead Sea, as has been so oft repeated? We ascertain the contrary fact, at the very moment when we touch the shore. A flock of wild ducks rises before us, and settles on the water out of gun-shot, where they begin sporting and diving with perfect unconcern. As we advance, beautiful insects show themselves on the gravelly beach; rooks are flying and screaming among the rent cliffs of the steep hills which border the lake."—The French traveller noticed the branches of trees, "half buried in the sand," looking as if "they had been burnt, for the wood is quite black as if taken from a fire. Carried away by the mountain torrents, which empty themselves into the Dead Sea, they have been deposited on the shore by the waters." The absence of life in the waters themselves is confirmed by M. de Saulcy; who also mentions the sulphurous smell they emit. But this smell was not perceived at first. When the traveller and his companions reached the spot which is identified with the En-gedi of the Scripture, "for the first time they found the air strongly tainted with sulphur, exactly like the smell of the Barajés water:" a smell "which every one knows is not unwholesome, and only slightly disagreeable" In taste, M. de Saulcy believes that the world does not produce "water more abominably offensive, although clear and limpid in appearance. At first it seems to have the taste of ordinary salt water; but in less than a second, it acts with such nauseous effect upon the lips, the tongue, and the palate, that the stomach instantly rejects it with insufferable disgust."—The most important result of M. de Saulcy's tour round the coast of the Dead Sea, is the discovery of ruins, which the traveller believes to be the relics of the five cities of the plain, four of which were so miraculously destroyed on account of the wickedness of their inhabitants. The remains of Sodom and Zoar are on the east of the lake, to the south; and so near each other, that Lot and his daughters could easily have reached Zoar in the time mentioned in the Bible, viz., from the first break of day, "when the morning arose," to the full rising of the sun upon the earth.*—The site of the ancient Gomorrah, is supposed to be on the extreme northern shore of the lake, where there are ruins—called Ouad Goumran,—"unquestionably the skeleton of a large city."—Zeboim M. de Saulcy fixes on the eastern shore of the Sea, opposite the promontory shown at page 486; which the Arabs call El Lisan, or the Tongue: this is the site usually appropriated to Zoar. The site of Admah, M. de Saulcy thinks he discovered on the same side of the Sea, further to the north. Similarity of name,—the traditions of the Arabs,—the fact that, with the exception of En-gedi, Masada, and Thamar, the sites of which are identified,—no other cities are mentioned, either by sacred or profane historians, as existing at any time on the shores of the Sea, than the five "cities of the plain,"—are the reasons adduced by M. de Saulcy for believing, that he has discovered the remains of those doomed places.—We think there is very great probability, if not absolute certainty, in his theory; which excited considerable attention at the time it was first given to the world. Whether he is right or not, all who have investigated the subject appear now to have come to one conclusion;—that the comparatively modern notion that the Dead Sea was formed when Sodom and Gomorrah and the other cities were destroyed,—the waters rising over their ruins,—is now abandoned. It is believed, that the lake always existed to receive the waters of the Jordan; but that the southern part, beyond the promontory, was "the Vale of Siddim," which the sacred historian describes as being "full of slime-pits,"† where the kings of the cities of the plain, were defeated by Chederlaomer and his allies.

* See Gen xix. 15, 23

† Gen xiv 10.

END OF THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE HOLY LAND.

COMPENDIUM OF SCRIPTURE GEOGRAPHY.

INTRODUCTION.

Of the numerous branches of inquiry into which the study of the science of Geography is divided, that which traces its relation to History—although, perhaps, at once the most instructive and the most interesting—has received the least share of general attention. Yet the alliance between these subjects is so intimate, that the study of Geography becomes important chiefly from its connexion with the circumstances which it is the province of history to record. Not only does the narrative of past events require in the student a knowledge of the localities which have been the scenes of their occurrence, but the influence which physical characteristics have exercised over the formation of the national character —the modes of thought and feeling—the customary associations—the manners and institutions—of the inhabitants of a country, form elements in its condition which must be understood and appreciated before its political and religious history can be read with advantage. The different circumstances under which an inland or a maritime country is placed, and the various influences of the lofty chain of mountains or the wide-spread plain—the parched and arid desert or the fertile valley—the navigable river or the rapid mountain torrent—have exercised a large share in directing the progress of civilization.

While the consideration of these circumstances in reference to any particular country becomes important in proportion to the part which its inhabitants have taken in the transactions of past ages, and to the position which it occupies among modern nations, it acquires additional interest when pursued in connexion with its political division at particular periods. The interest which the student feels in tracing the former condition of a country which has been the scene of memorable events is similar to the ardour with which the traveller pursues the course of a mighty river from its outlet to its source. As the latter strives to trace the stream through all its windings to its remote origin in the recesses of some mountain-district, noting as he advances the successive acquisitions which it receives in order that he may place them in the record of observed facts, so does the former desire to become acquainted with the aspect which has at different times been presented by the country which is the object of his attention; to realise its appearance when it contained few towns or settled abodes of man, and pastoral tribes wandered over the face of the land; to note its political changes, from its petty kingdoms, which consisted of little more than the district surrounding a single town, to its division into states or provinces, until it perhaps becomes at length the dependency of some more powerful empire; and to observe how in progress of time every harbour on its coast is made the seat of commercial enterprise, how regular lines of communication are established from place to place, and how its surface is everywhere covered with the works of civilized and social man.

It will be readily acknowledged that there is no country in regard to which these considerations possess a deeper interest than Palestine—the Land of Promise of the Jew—the Holy Land of the Christian,—pre-eminently the country which commands more and more of the attention of mankind in proportion to the increasing diffusion of religion and mental cultivation. But even placing out of view the obvious and necessary connexion between the geographical features of Palestine and the manners of its inhabitants, and regarding them merely as accessory to the topographical illustration of the Scriptures, the Bible is manifestly a work which requires the reader to bear constantly in his mind the nature and situation of those places which were the scenes of the incidents recorded in its pages, to enable him to understand fully their character and purport. The importance which thus belongs to Scriptural Geography has by no means been lost sight of; the talents of the most learned critics and the ablest commentators in various countries have from time to time been exercised in collecting such notices of the places mentioned in the Bible as were to be found either in the narratives of the historian or the traveller, in selecting from these and other sources all that was *known* respecting them, and in offering the most plausible conjectures when certainty was not to be attained. It may at first sight appear that the geography of the Scriptures has been so fully illustrated in this way as to leave little room for any attempt at originality. Since the commencement of the present century, however, and even within the last few years, the researches of numerous accomplished travellers have added considerably to our knowledge of Palestine and the surrounding regions. Under the greater facilities which the late government of Syria offered for the passage of Europeans through the country, observations formerly made have been verified, or, where erroneous, corrected,—new routes have been laid open,—remains which had escaped the notice of previous travellers have been discovered,—and many points which hitherto remained doubtful have been satisfactorily settled. A vast amount of information has thus been acquired which has not yet been made available for the illustration of Biblical Geography, and even that which has been so applied has been frequently confounded with previous opinions and conjectures, so that the result has often tended rather to confuse than to elucidate. In many cases, the hypotheses which were framed in the absence of precise information in reference to the geography of Palestine, although disproved by the knowledge since acquired, have continued to be the basis on which has been founded the elucidation of those points of Scriptural Geography which must always remain in some measure doubtful, and the errors which *necessarily* occurred in the old Scriptural maps have thus been perpetuated from one to another. As therefore materials for forming a correct system of Biblical Geography are constantly accumulating, the task of collecting and analysing them is one which frequently requires to be undertaken anew.

It is the object of the present memoir to illustrate, historically as well as physically, the Geography of Palestine, by representing that country in the different aspects which it has presented at successive periods, from the patriarchal ages to the present day; and by maps of such of the countries surrounding it as become of Scriptural interest from the intimate connexion between them and the Hebrew nation, and the frequent mention of them in their records. To each map is given a brief notice, pointing out its particular purport, and supplying such information in reference to it as may serve to render it more intelligible and useful.

The absence of a strictly chronological arrangement in the delineation of boundaries and localities has been felt as an important defect in the maps generally prepared for the illustration of ancient geography: ancient and modern, classical and Scriptural appellations have been mixed together, without regard to the period of history to which they relate, in such a manner as to leave on the mind of the student no distinct impression of the actual condition of a country at *any one period*. Yet this *synchronism* of geography, as it has been termed by an able critic,* constitutes, when presented to view, the most important guide in tracing the progress of a nation's civilization, since without it we are unable to form an estimate of its condition either internally or with reference to other countries. It is a particular object of the Maps connected with this work to preserve this, by successively delineating the Holy Land during its period of independence, and its subjection to the dominion of the Assyrians, the Persians, the Greek princes of Syria, the Romans, and, in modern times, to the Mohammedan power.

In proceeding to notice briefly the authorities on which this part of our work has been based, we may observe that the Maps embody the latest and most authentic topographical information. On those

* 'Quart. Journal of Education,' vol. iii. 45 p.

questions of Scriptural Geography which have given rise to varying hypotheses,—such as the wanderings of the Israelites in the desert,—and in the position of disputed sites of places, they are constructed in accordance with the views taken in the notes to the 'Pictorial Bible,' in which work are detailed the arguments which have led to the conclusions which they exhibit. In determining the position of the numerous towns mentioned in the sacred narrative, we are in many cases enabled to avail ourselves of the discovery of ruined sites which have been found in conjunction with such circumstances as leave no doubt with regard to the places which they represent. The situation of many others may be at least approximately ascertained by means of the distances between them and well-known places which are preserved in the writings of Josephus, and also of Eusebius and Jerome, who lived at a time when the remains of many places in Palestine which have since perished were still in existence. For a similar reason the works of some of the earlier travellers possess considerable topographical value, as their authors saw and indicated the situation of many towns and villages which have since disappeared. These materials have been fully analysed by Bochart, Calmet, Le Clerc, Michaelis, and other eminent Biblical critics, and their conclusions, when not superseded by later information, are in general adopted. Frequently, however, we have nothing more than the internal evidence of the Bible to guide us in the determination of particular localities. A novel feature in this Atlas is the use of distinct signs to denote the position of towns coming under either of these classes; thus placing at once before the eye of the student an indication of the *degree of authenticity* which may be attached to each, and, by enabling him to discriminate between the *known* and the *conjectural*, obviating the evils which have hitherto been attendant on the use of maps in the study of ancient geography. In carrying this into effect three kinds of marks are adopted throughout the series, which may be thus explained. In indicating the position of a town which still exists, either entire or in ruins, a circular mark, thus ○, is adopted; where there are remains in regard to which it is doubtful of what place they mark the site, or where a careful application of the measurements recorded in ancient authors may be looked upon as producing a considerable approach towards accuracy, a square, thus □, is used; and a triangle, thus △, is inserted in those cases which are most doubtful, and in which the neighbourhood, rather than the actual situation, of the place may be considered as pointed out. A mark of interrogation is placed after the names of rivers, tracts of country, &c., which have given rise to doubt as to their identification with similar localities in modern geography. Where it had been thought desirable to append to the ancient the modern name of a place, as their comparison may sometimes enable the student to trace the former in the present orthography, the opposite character of the two is so distinctly intimated as to prevent the result of any confusion from it. It is hoped that by thus presenting an analysis of the construction of each Map, clear ideas will be conveyed of the difficulties in which some parts of the subject of Biblical Geography are involved, and of the means employed for their elucidation.

But maps alone, however carefully they may be constructed, are not sufficient to teach geography, although indispensable assistants in the prosecution of its study. The following papers explanatory of the Maps will therefore provide the means of furnishing such information in reference to the physical construction of the country as cannot be conveyed in a map,—such as the elevation or depression of different districts, the height of mountains, the fertility of particular spots, &c. They also enable us to point out, in the most appropriate place, the latest sources to which we are indebted for information; and this is rendered the more important by the circumstance that some valuable contributions to the geography of Palestine and the adjacent regions have appeared since the publication of these Maps commenced.

An Index of the names of places mentioned in the Old and New Testaments, with the modern names by which those of them yet in existence are distinguished, and a reference to the Map in which they may be found, completes the Atlas; so that while, as a work on the general Geography of Palestine, it forms a valuable and indeed almost indispensable companion to the 'Family Bible,' the 'Pictorial History of Palestine,' and the 'Sunday Book,' it may be regarded as constituting in itself a complete COMPENDIUM OF SCRIPTURE GEOGRAPHY.

Lastly, we have to explain in a few words the peculiarities which distinguish the appearance of these Maps from any which have hitherto been published. These are,—1st, That, by a novel method of printing, the various divisions of the countries are covered with *distinct colours*, so that the boundaries are clearly perceived at the first view; and, 2nd, That the mountains, instead of being, as in maps engraved in the usual manner, indicated by *black* lines, are in *white*, distinctly and prominently relieved by the coloured ground. In the best engraved maps a serious imperfection has always been felt to result from the names and the hills being alike printed in black, in consequence of which either the names are obscured by the hills, or the hills must be omitted in order to allow of the names being read. This renders them exceedingly difficult of reference; and it may be generally remarked of engraved maps, that, in proportion as the physical features of a country are fully and correctly delineated, so do the names and boundaries become obscure and unintelligible. In the ordinary process of map-engraving the evil complained of appears unavoidable; but this is no longer the case when a different medium is used for conveying each part of the requisite information. By the method adopted in this series of Maps, the physical features of the countries—their hills and valleys—their lakes and streams—are clearly delineated, without in the least interfering with the exhibition of names and places; while their various divisions, distinguished by colours, are presented at once and distinctly to the eye of the student.

No. I.

ARMENIA, MESOPOTAMIA, &c., IN THE TIME OF ABRAHAM.

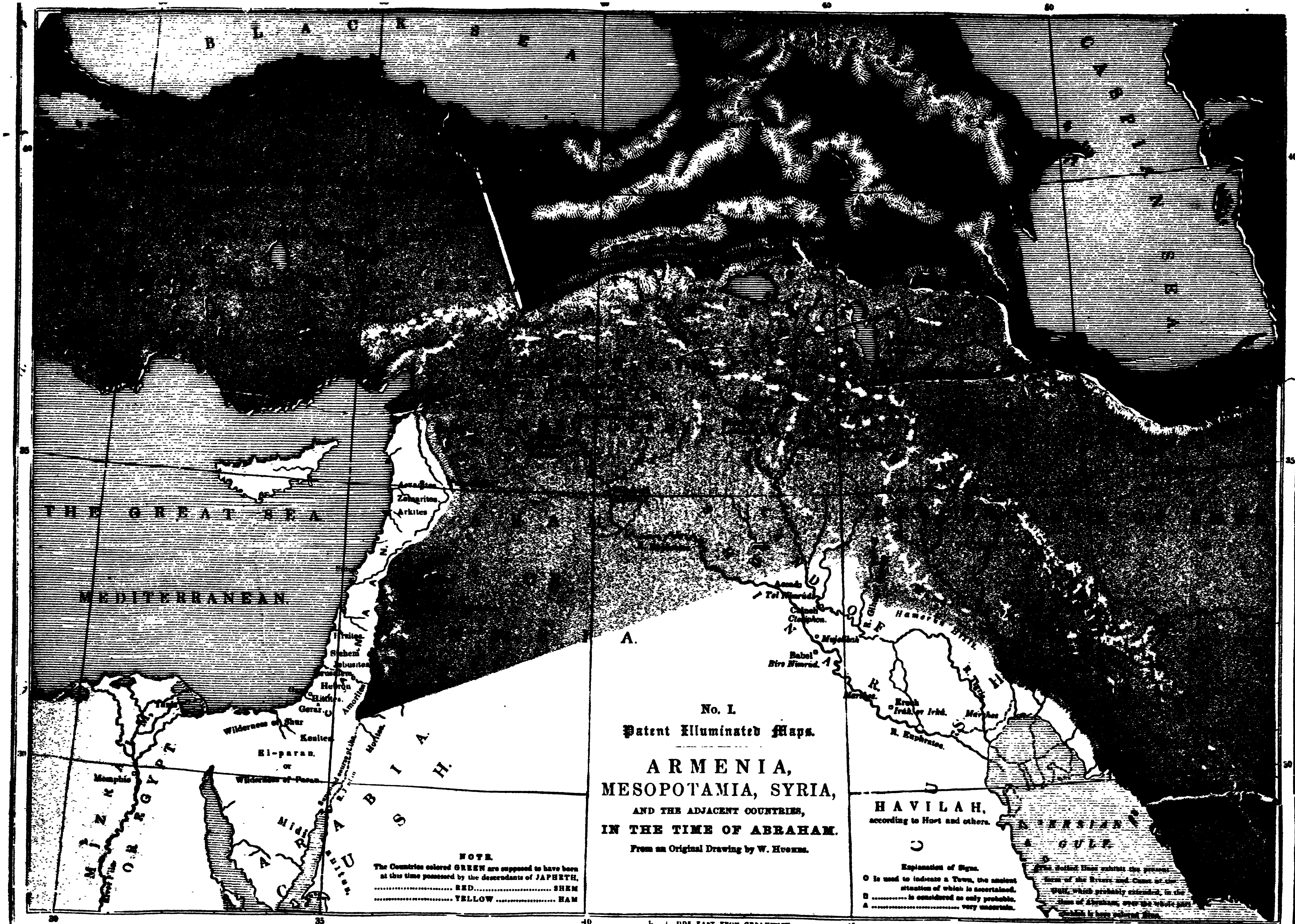
THE countries which are exhibited in this Map have in all ages attracted a large share of the attention of mankind. Constituting the most important portion of the great Empires which have successively held the sovereignty of Western Asia, and, from their intermediate position between the three divisions of the Old World, being made the high road by which the productions of one region have been conveyed to another, and the social condition of each been thereby advanced, they possess an interest which is not confined to any one period, but extends over the whole range of history. Their chief attraction, however, to the student of Scripture, at the period which our Map is intended to illustrate, arises from the fact of their containing Mount Ararat, on which the Ark rested after the Deluge,—the land of Shinar, the seat of the earliest of recorded kingdoms,—and Ur of the Chaldees, from which the patriarch Abraham was called to fulfil the mission with which he was intrusted.

The extensive highland of Armenia, which may be regarded as an offset on the north-west from the great table-land of Western Asia, consists of numerous chains of lofty mountains, rising from a plateau elevated from 6000 to 7000 feet above the sea. In the elevated valleys between them are the sources of rivers which run in different directions towards all points of the compass. Connected with it on the north by ranges of lower elevation, which contain between them the valleys of the river Kûr and its branches, is the chain of Mount Caucasus, the natural barrier between Europe and Asia, the highest summit of which reaches an elevation of 16,500 feet.* On the west, Armenia is connected by Mount Taurus, and other parallel chains, with the elevated country of Asia Minor; and on the south, by mountainous districts of less elevation, with the great plain of Mesopotamia, the descent to which from the mountain region is in some places almost abrupt. The character of this plain varies considerably in different parts; in the northern and central portions, which correspond to the modern Al-jezirâh, it is generally bare and unproductive, scantily covered with coarse grass and thorny shrubs, and containing extensive tracts of soil impregnated with saline matter, although even here the hilly district of Sinjár and the country extending thence to Mardín and Koch-hisár are described as containing tracts which equal in fertility the richest soils in the world.† The southern part of the plain, the modern Irak-Arabi, from about the thirty-fourth parallel of latitude southward, presents an entirely level surface, in many parts scarcely elevated above the rivers by which it is watered; a circumstance to which, as it afforded the means of extensive irrigation, its ancient fertility was chiefly owing. It is bounded on the east by the mountains which rise, in successive ranges, to the table-land of Persia, and on the west by the great desert of Syria, which leaves only a narrow strip of cultivable land between itself and the Euphrates.

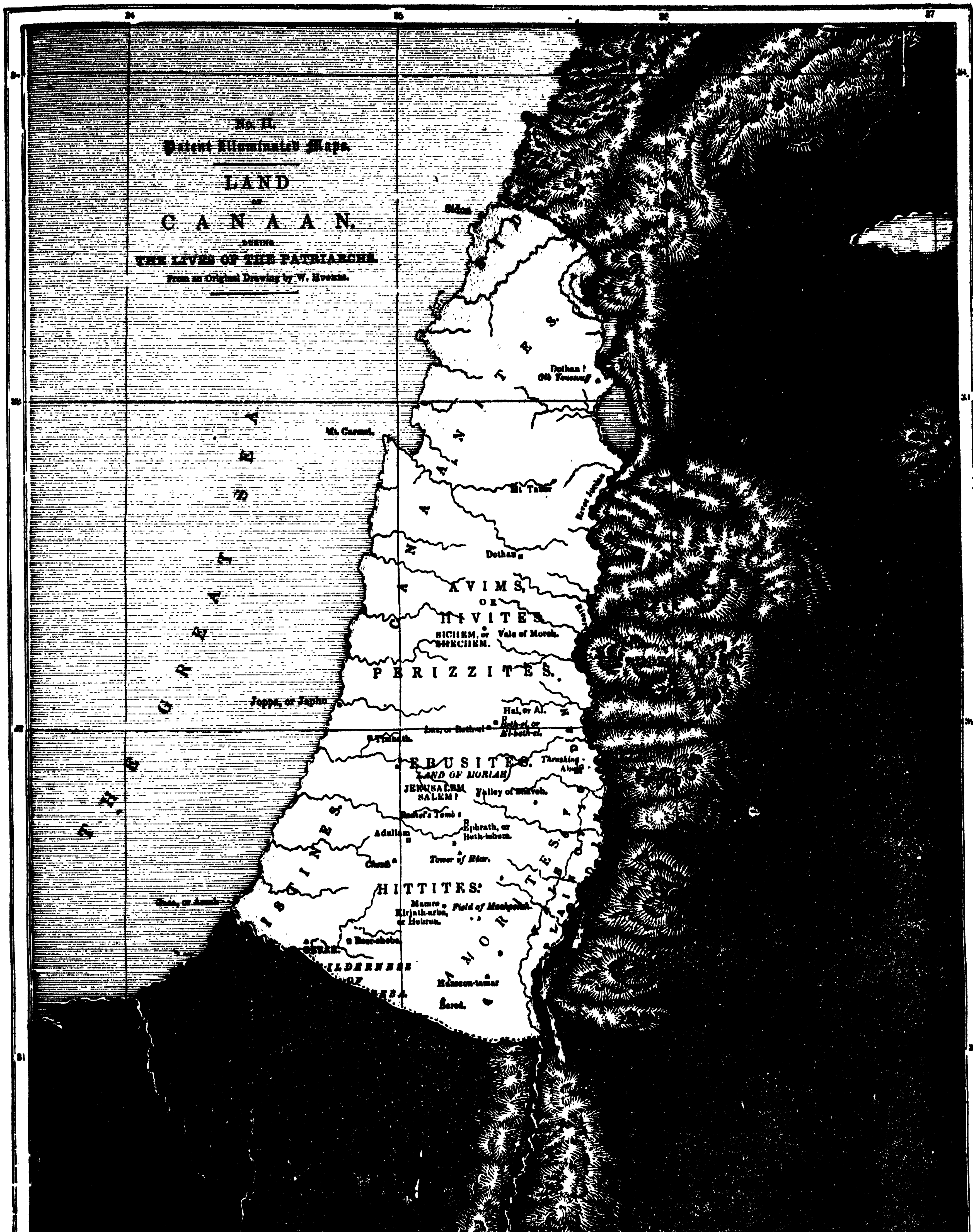
The mountain which is generally identified with the Ararat of the Bible, and is called by the modern name of Agri-dagh, appears to be the loftiest in Armenia. It consists of two peaks, divided by a wide chasm, which are distinguished as the Great and Little

* Murray's 'Encyclop. of Geography,' p. 1068.

† Visit to the Sinjár Hills, with some Account of the Sect of Yezídís, and of various Places in the Mesopotamian Desert, by F. Forbes, Esq., in 'Journ. of Royal Geog. Soc.,' vol. ix. p. 409.



No. I.
Patent Illuminated Maps.
ARMENIA,
MESOPOTAMIA, SYRIA,
AND THE ADJACENT COUNTRIES,
IN THE TIME OF ABRAHAM.
From an Original Drawing by W. Hughes.
BLACK SEA
CASPIAN SEA
THE GREAT SEA
MEDITERRANEAN
HAVILAH,
according to Huet and others.
PERSIAN GULF
ARABIA
EGYPT
Memphis
Wilderness of Shur
El-paran,
or
Wilderness of Paran
Kenites
Gerar
Hittites
Hebron
Amorites
Jebusites
Shechem
Perizites
Arkites
Zemarites
Arvadites
Babel
Birs Nimrud
Mujellibah
Calneh
Ctesiphon
Tel Nimrud
Accad
Erech
Irak or Irkd
R. Euphrates
Hamerin Distr.
NOTE.
The Countries colored GREEN are supposed to have been at this time possessed by the descendants of JAPHETH.
RED .... SHEM
YELLOW .... HAM
Explanation of Signs.
O Is used to indicate a Town, the ancient situation of which is ascertained.
□ .... is considered as only probable.
A .... very uncertain.
EAST FROM GREENWICH.


No. II.
Patent Illuminated Maps.
LAND
OF
C A N A A N.
DURING
THE LIVES OF THE PATRIARCHS.
Mt. Carmel.
Mt. Tabor
Dothan
Dothan ?
A V I M S,
OR
H I V I T E S.
SICHEM, or SHECHEM.
Vale of Moreh.
P E R I Z Z I T E S.
Joppa, or Japho
Hai, or Ai.
J E B U S I T E S.
LAND OF MORIAH
JERUSALEM SALEM ?
Rachel's Tomb
Adullam
Ephrath, or Beth-lehem.
Tower of Edar.
H I T T I T E S.
Mamre
Kirjath-arba, or Hebron.
Field of Machpelah
Beer-sheba
Hazezon-tamar
LONGITUDE EAST FROM GREENWICH.

Ararat, the former of which rises to the height of 17,260 feet;* both summits are covered with perpetual snow. Of the branches into which Taurus divides after crossing (from the west) the Euphrates, that to the north, called Asi Kur (the Mount Niphates of antiquity), is the highest, its summits rising above the line of congelation, which in this latitude is probably not much below 10,000 feet.†

Within some portion of the countries above enumerated, it is generally admitted that the site of Eden, if to be identified at all, is to be found. Of the many conjectures on this subject the two which appear to have the greatest probability are those which place it either in Armenia, between the sources of the rivers Phasis, Araxes, Tigris, and Euphrates,—or in Irak-Arabi, near the mouths of the two latter streams. This question is discussed in the Notes to the 'Pictorial Bible' (Gen. ii. 8), the editor of which has expressed his decided preference of the latter alternative.

It would be foreign to our purpose to enter here into any discussion as to the situation of the cities founded by Nimrod and Asshur in the land of Shinar and Assyria. The positions exhibited in the Map are, with the exception of Erech, those which have received the sanction of most Biblical critics, and a future map will offer an opportunity for a few remarks upon some of their existing monuments. Erech is placed on the site of a mound called by the Arabs Irák, Irkáh, or Senkerah, passed by the 'Euphrates Expedition' on the west, and described as towering in superior magnitude above those which surround it. A remark of Mr. Ainsworth's upon this and similar remains in the same region may be quoted for the sake of the striking picture which it presents of the present appearance of that country. He observes that—"no monuments in Babylonia and Chaldæa appear to be more valid regarding the antiquity and Assyrian origin of sites than the lofty artificial mounds, of which the present degenerate hordes of the tent and the spear narrate so many fabulous tales, but which almost everywhere present themselves, when there are also other strong grounds of presumption of an Assyrian or Chaldæo-Babylonian origin. These colossal piles are found domineering over the dreary waste, to the uniformity of which they offer a striking contrast; being visible at great distances, and, although thrown by the *shráb* or mirage into strange and contorted shapes, yet they always appear, when seen upon the verge of the horizon, as if possessing colossal dimensions, and produce an effect, in point of grandeur and magnificence, which cannot be imagined in any other situation."‡

Ur of the Chaldees is generally identified with the town now called 'Urfah, or Orfah, although it appears doubtful whether the name is not intended to designate a district rather than a town. If so, there can be little doubt of its being that in which 'Urfah is situated. This city, under the name of Edessa, was for some centuries the capital of the kingdom of Osroene, which was conquered by the Romans and annexed to their empire A.D. 216,§ and is now a flourishing and well-built town, the capital of a small pachalik of the same name, enjoying considerable trade, with a population estimated at 20,000.‖ It is universally regarded by the inhabitants of the country as the birth-place of Abraham. Although the proximity of the modern village of Harrán to this place renders its correspondence with the Haran of Abraham's history doubtful, yet the other alternatives which have been proposed appear to possess greater difficulties.¶ Harrán, which has long since fallen to decay, is now only inhabited by a few Arabs, by whom the rich and fertile plain in which it is situated is so inadequately populated that the same piece of ground is often only cultivated once in three years.** Whatever opinion may be entertained with reference to these places, there is no reasonable ground for doubting that the country in which they are situated was that from which Abraham "went forth to go into the land of Canaan."

No. II.

Canaan during the Lives of the Patriarchs.

It is the object of this Map to illustrate the history of the patriarchs, by exhibiting the Land of Promise during the time when "the Canaanite was then in the land." It therefore embraces a period of history from the call of Abraham (B.C. 1921), to the permanent departure of Jacob and his family for Egypt (B.C. 1706). Although the sacred history acquaints us with some changes in the occupation of portions of the land which occurred during this interval, they were not of such a nature as to alter materially the characteristics which it presented at the time of Abraham's first arrival. The Canaanites appear to have then constituted a number of small and settled communities, every town, with the adjacent district, being under the government of its own chief, and not being *necessarily* connected with, or subject to, any other power. That they were far from numerous may be concluded from the fact that, as Dr. Hales remarks (New Anal. of Chron., vol. i. p. 352), "there were considerable tracts of land unappropriated, on which Abraham and his nephew Lot freely pastured their cattle without hindrance or molestation."

The territories occupied by the tribes mentioned in the promise to Abraham (Gen. xv. 19) are indicated with as much precision as the scattered notices of them contained in the Bible will admit of, excepting those of the Kennizites, Kadmonites, and Girgashites, of which nothing can be determined. The latter have (on, however, insufficient grounds)* been identified by some with the Gergesenes of the New Testament (Matt. viii. 28). The conclusion that the Salem of Abraham's history, the residence of Melchizedek (Gen. xiv. 18), was the original of the city of Jerusalem is dissented from by some writers, on the authority of Jerome, by whom it is placed more to the north, near the ford over the Jordan at *Bisan*. The site of Dothan is marked in two places; the more northerly is that which tradition represents as the scene of the transaction which deprived Joseph of his liberty; the other is placed, on the authority of Eusebius, at the distance of twelve miles north-east from Samaria. (*See Map of the Kingdoms of Judah and Israel.*)

Although at this early period we meet with the names of but few towns, probably many others were already in existence, of which no mention is made until a later time. As from this circumstance the student is enabled to perceive without difficulty those places to which early Scriptural associations are attached, and these require but little explanation, the space here allotted may be usefully employed in directing attention to the prominent characteristic features of the country, and more especially to those which the Map itself does not render evident. It is at once observed that all the mountains which traverse the country on both sides of the Jordan are branches from the parallel chains which appear in the northern part of the Map under the name of Lebanon. The westernmost of these ranges, which, at a distance from the coast diminishing from about 25 miles in the north to half that extent more to the south, traverses a great part of the length of Syria, is an offset from the great range of Taurus, in Asia Minor, from which it is only partially divided by the opening which occurs at the mouth of the river Orontes. The eastern range, although its more distinct origin as a separate chain occurs about the parallel of 34° 15', may be regarded as belonging to the same mountain system. None of the other mountains in Palestine rise to a height at all comparable to that which is attained by some parts of these ranges. The *general* elevation of the *western* chain (to which was afterwards applied the distinctive name of Libanus), which about the latitude of 34° appears to attain a height little less than 11,900 feet, considerably exceeds that of the eastern range (or Anti-Libanus), which may be estimated at about 9000 feet, although the latter contains the highest summit in the whole system, and indeed in all Syria. From the considerations stated in the Chapter on Mountains (p. 427.), it appears to result that the elevation of that portion of the chain to which the Scriptural name of Mount Hermon is applied and which is known by the modern title of Jebel Es-sheikh, cannot be less than 12,000 feet. These mountains, after passing in diversified forms through the country, are continued to the south in the mountains of Seir.

Of the numerous streams of which the courses are marked on the Map, it should be observed that, in addition to the Jordan, only five, viz.—the Nahr Liettani (the Leontes of antiquity), flowing between the parallel ranges of Lebanon,—the Nahr Barrada, rising in Anti-Libanus and flowing in several channels through Damascus,—the river Mandúr (the ancient Hieromax), falling into the Jordan a few miles south of the Sea of Chinnereth,—the Jabbok,—and, more to the south, the Arnon, continue to flow during the whole of the year. The rest, explained in the Chapter on Rivers (p. 471.), are really mere winter torrents, whose beds are for the most part dry during the summer; and those which preserve during that season a narrow stream of water present an appearance which strikingly contrasts with that which they bear when swollen by long rains or the melting of the winter snows.

The Map differs from those of the same country at subsequent periods in the absence of the Dead Sea, the place of which was, in

* 'Pen. Cyclop.,' art. 'Asia.' † Ainsworth's 'Researches in Assyria,' p. 21.
‡ 'Researches in Assyria,' pp. 125, 126.
§ 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,' c. viii.
‖ Murray's 'Encyclop. of Geogr.,' p. 913.
¶ 'Pict. Hist. of Palestine,' vol. i. p. 47.
** 'Researches in Assyria,' p. 263.

* 'Pict. Bible,' Deut. vii. 1, Note.

the time of Abraham, occupied by the fertile valley of Siddim, forming part of the Valley of the Jordan.* This river, formed of several small streams which rise to the north of Dan or Laish (the modern *Banias*), and unite in the "Waters of Merom" (Bahr el Hûle), flows southward through the Sea of Chinnereth, and is at present terminated by the Dead Sea, into which it falls. Until very recently it had been generally conjectured that this river, previous to the catastrophe by which the cities of the plain were destroyed and the district in which they stood converted into the bed of a lake, continued its southward course to the eastern arm of the Red Sea, through the valley of El 'Arabah. This hypothetical course is indicated by a dotted line. Since the first publication of the present Map, the conclusion thus adopted has been shown to be erroneous by the observations of the Count de Bertou, in a 'Journey from Jerusalem, by the Dead Sea, to 'Akabah and back by Petra,'† in 1838; and likewise by Dr. Robinson and the Rev. E. Smith in a journey, during the same year, undertaken for the illustration of Biblical Geography. A subsequent Map will offer a more suitable opportunity for a few explanatory remarks on this subject, and it is only needful here to state the main conclusion at which these gentlemen have arrived, which is, that "in the present state of things the Jordan never could have flowed into the Ælanitic Gulf" (the Gulf of 'Akabah, or eastern arm of the Red Sea).‡ As it is not the purpose of these papers to enter into hypothetical questions, but merely to supply facts, this is not the place to enter into any attempt at a solution of the difficulties which may be felt to be revived by the overthrow of what had certainly appeared to be a satisfactory explanation.

The remaining Maps of Canaan furnish an opportunity of pointing out such other important features in the physical geography of the country as seem to require explanation, and the present brief notice may therefore be concluded by directing attention to the nature of the country by which it is bounded on the east and the south. These deserts, which on the one hand extend to the Euphrates, and on the other to the peninsula of Mount Sinai, are by no means so desolate or appalling as many are from the name led to imagine. In many places, and especially on the frontiers, the soil is naturally fertile, and even rich, and its sterility is owing entirely to the want of water. In the Chapter on Valleys, Plains, and Deserts, the general character of these extensive wastes has already been described.

Bounded thus on two sides by the desert, on the north by mountains, on the west by the sea, Canaan was a land well adapted to become the abode of that people whom "the Lord had chosen to be a special people unto himself." Abundantly productive of all the necessaries, and many of the luxuries, of life—a land of corn, of wine and oil—its inhabitants could have little temptation to intercourse with surrounding nations; and their geographical position was thus calculated to afford the most important aid to their institutions in the preservation of that *unity* which so strongly characterized the Hebrew nation.

No. III.

Countries traversed by the Israelites in their progress from Egypt to Canaan.

This Map, in addition to the countries which were the scene of the lengthened wanderings of the Hebrews prior to their entering on the inheritance of the Promised Land, embraces also that portion of Egypt with which alone they can be supposed, at the early period to which it refers, to have had any connection. As the direction of the route which they pursued through the wilderness, and the stations which they occupied, involve some theoretical questions, upon all of which the views adopted in the notes to the 'Pictorial Bible' have been strictly followed, it is needless here to do more than briefly notice the most important of its peculiarities, referring to that work those who may be desirous of entering into a detailed consideration of them. These are:—first, that Mount Sinai is identified with the mountain which now bears the name of *Jebel* (Mount) *Serbal*, instead of with that called *Jebel Mousa* (Mount Moses), its representative in the present traditions of the country;§ secondly, that as a consequence of the preceding conclusion, Rephidim is placed on the north side of the *Wadi* (Valley) *Feiran*, instead of in the valley between the peaks of Mounts Moses and St. Catherine, in the highest region of the Sinai mountains, where the rock from which the miraculous supply of water is pretended to have gushed is shown by the monks of the Sinai convent and the neighbouring Arabs;‖ and, thirdly, that the Kadesh or Kadesh-barnea of Num. xiii. 26, and Deut. i. 19, is considered the same as the Kadesh of Num. xx. 1, and a position assigned to it considerably to the south of that which it usually occupies in Scriptural maps.*

A brief explanation of the course which the Israelites are supposed to have taken will be of service in rendering the Map more easily intelligible. The portion of the route from its commencement to Etham is one upon which considerable difficulty has been felt, from the absence of any *existing* indications which can be regarded as affording satisfactory evidence on the subject. It is universally admitted that the tract of country bordering on the Pelusiac branch of the Nile was that "land of Goshen" which was the scene alike of the prosperity and sufferings of the Israelites; and Rameses, the point from which they started, is placed by the concurring testimony of many writers, including Josephus (*Antiq.* b. ii. c. 15), not far from the place where the Nile divided into several branches. Succoth, to which the first day's journey brought them, is, in accordance with the work already referred to,† placed near *Birket-el-Hadj* (Pilgrims' pool), where the great pilgrim caravan to Mecca annually makes its final arrangements previous to its departure. In a subsequent work, however, the same author expresses his abandonment of this opinion, and "thinks it, upon the whole, more likely that the point from which the Hebrews departed in the first instance may have been in that neighbourhood. Succoth, therefore, must be sought somewhere about a day's journey in the direction of Suez. The name denotes *tents* or *booths*, and it is useless to seek its site, as the name appears only to denote a place where caravans passing that way usually encamped."‡ The route thence to Etham is supposed to correspond with that of the great caravan, of which the modern castle of Ajeroud is one of the stations. The alternatives of the passage of the Red Sea either opposite to the *Ain Mousa* (Fountain of Moses), or at the opening of the valley of Badea, are indicated, leaving it to the student to prefer that which he may deem most in accordance with the Scriptural narrative. Of Migdol and Baalzephon no trace remains. From the opposite shore of the gulf the route indicated is that usually taken by travellers from Suez to Sinai. The well of bitter waters at Howara, and the springs and palm-trees of Wadi Ghurundel, evince their correspondence with Marah and Elim. Dophkah and Alush may perhaps be found in Wadi Naszeb and Wadi Boodra, both of which contain springs of good water,§ which does not again occur before reaching Wadi Feiran, one of the finest and best-watered valleys in the whole peninsula.‖

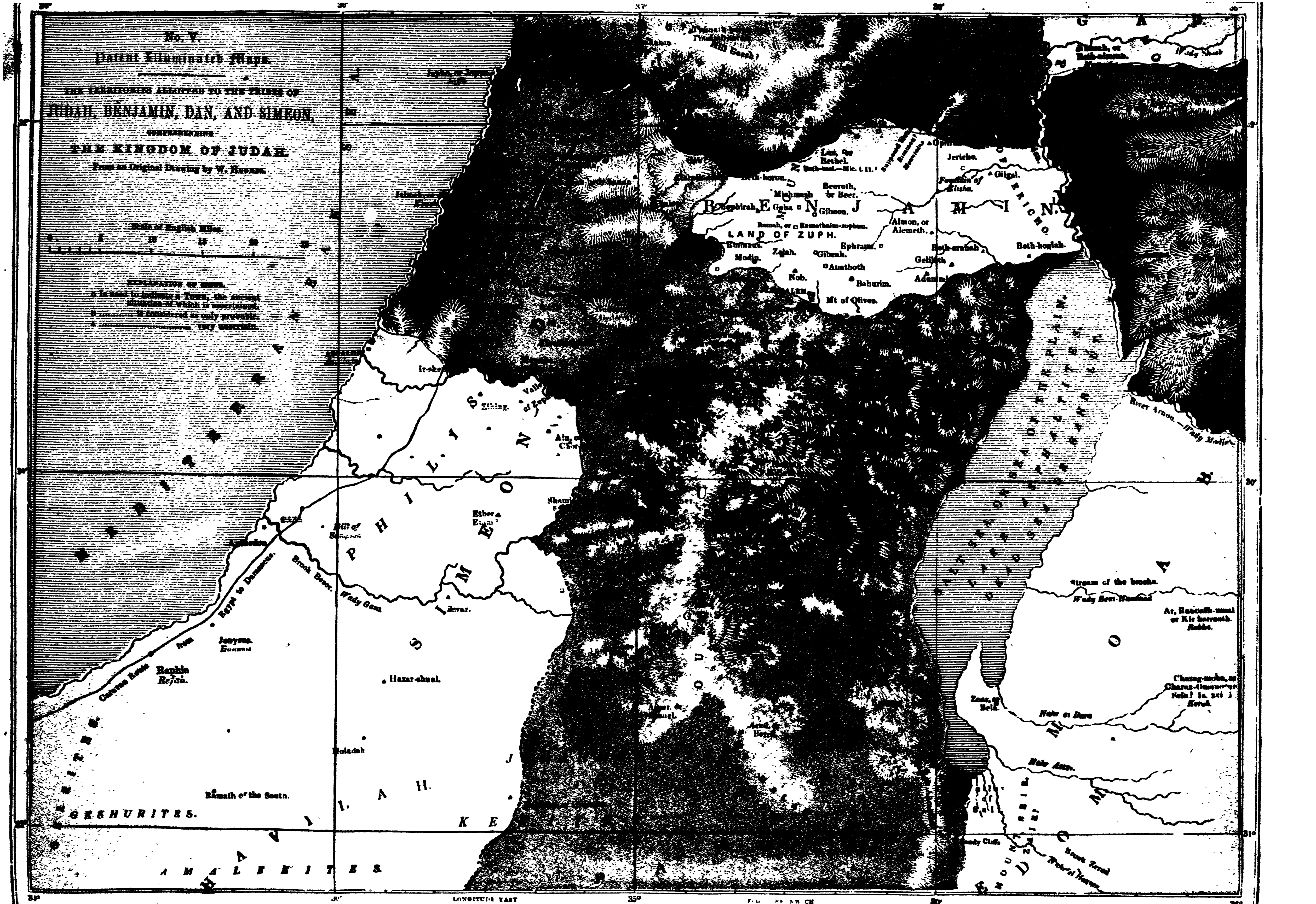
After leaving Sinai, the Israelites are supposed to have proceeded in the direction indicated through Wadi Safran, the only opening in the chain of mountains, called El-Tyh, which bounds the peninsula of Sinai on the north,¶ until they arrived at Kadesh-barnea (Num. xiii. 26; Deut. i. 2, 19). This was the point from which they dispatched the spies to examine the land of Canaan, and here their thirty-eight years' wandering commenced. It is not until long afterwards that any traces are to be found of the direction which they pursued. It appears probable "that they wandered to and fro through all the region of El-Tyh (of the wandering), frequently, perhaps, in the course of the thirty-eight years, returning to the same stations where they knew from experience that pasture might be found for the flocks."**

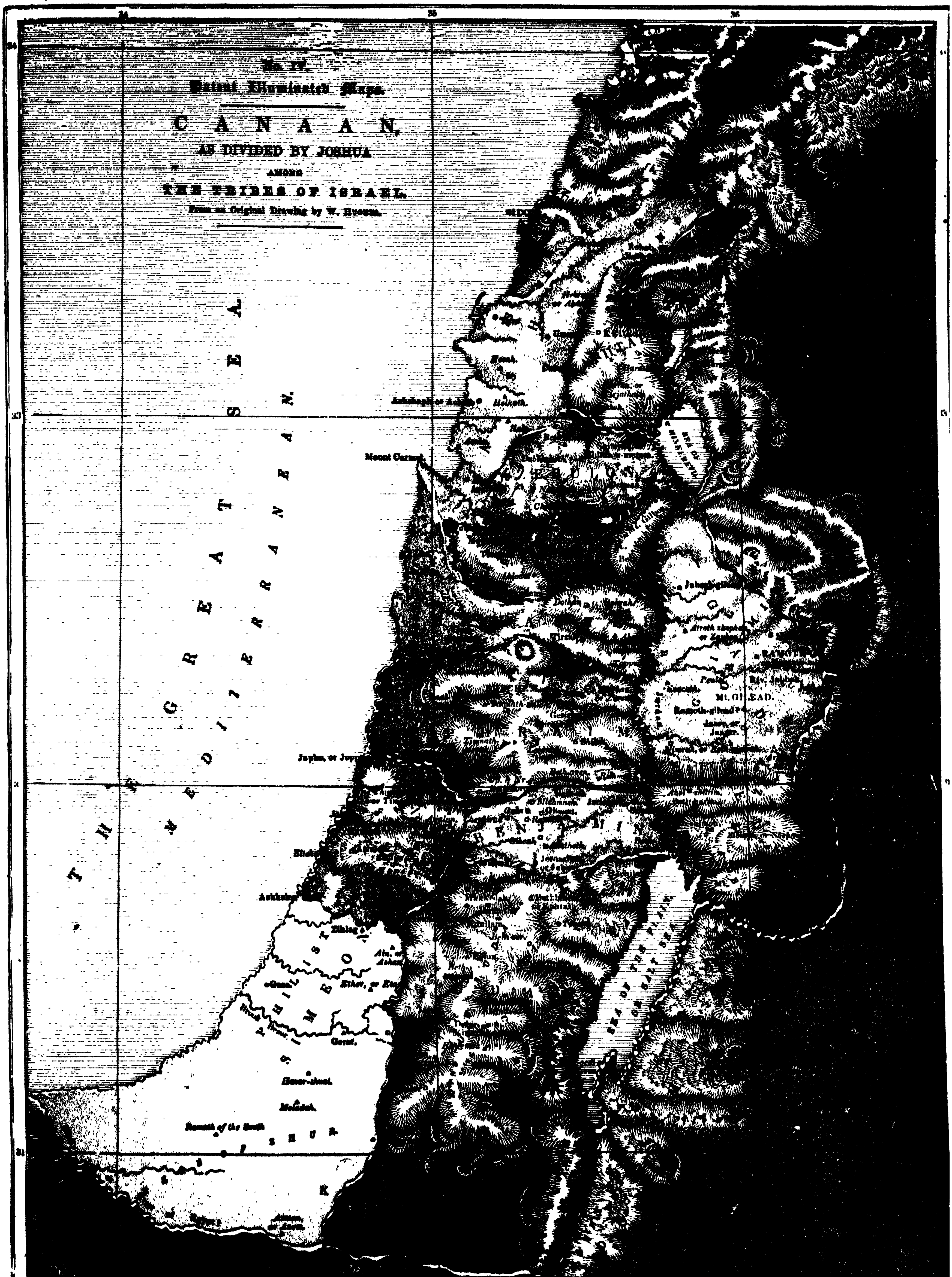
They are again found, however, at Ezion-gaber (Num. xxxiii. 35), whence their route is supposed to have been northward, up the valley called Wadi 'Akabah, the southward prolongation of Wadi 'Arabah, identified with the wilderness of Zin, until they again reached Kadesh (Num. xx. 1). While here, the request was made to the King of Edom to allow of their passing through his dominions (Num. xx. 17); and it is conjectured by Colonel Leake†† that the valley of Ghoeyr, which crosses the mountains of Seir in lat. 34° 34', and is the only opening which could be easily traversed by so numerous a force, was the road through which they desired to pass. On the refusal of this request, they were under the necessity of turning southward down the wilderness of Zin, passing Mount Hor, "by the way of the Red Sea," and rounding the southern extremity of the Mountains of Seir, before they could turn to the north to compass the land of Edom (Num. xxi. 4; Deut. ii. 8). Embosomed in a valley in these mountains, and almost surrounded by lofty cliffs, are the remains of the city of Petra, the capital of the Nabathæan Arabs of classical history, and interesting to the Scriptural student from the probability of its being the Selah or Joktheel of 2 Kings xiv. 7. It appears to have been the metro-

* The received opinion now is, that a lake always existed there; see Note, p. 494.
† 'Journ. of Royal Geogr. Soc.,' vol. ix. p. 277.
‡ 'Biblical Researches in Palestine,' 1841.
§ 'Pict. Bible,' Exod. xix. 2. ‖ Ibid., Exod. xvii. 1.

* 'Pict. Bible,' Num. xx. 1, and xxxiii. 36. † Ibid., Exod. xii. 37, Note.
‡ 'Pict. Hist. of Palestine,' vol. ii. p. 176. § Ibid., p. 195.
‖ Burckhardt, 'Travels in Syria,' pp. 598, 602.
¶ Laborde, 'Journey through Arabia Petræa, &c.,' p. 216.
** 'Pict. Bible,' Num. xxxiii. 1, Note.
†† Burckhardt, 'Syria,' p. 15, Preface.




No. V.
Patent Illuminated Maps.
THE TERRITORIES ALLOTTED TO THE TRIBES OF
JUDAH, BENJAMIN, DAN, AND SIMEON,
THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH.
Scale of English Miles.
Jericho.
Gilgal.
Bethel.
Beeroth, or Beer.
Gibeon.
Gaba
Michmash
Almon, or Alemeth.
LAND OF ZUPH.
Ephraim.
Gibeah.
Anathoth
Bahurim.
Nob.
Mt of Olives.
Beth-hoglah.
Beth-arabah
Modin
Zelah.
B E N J A M I N
P H I L I S T I N E S
S I M E O N
Ether
Hill of
Brook Besor.
Wady Gaza.
Hazar-shual.
Holadah
Ramath of the South.
Raphia
Jenysus.
Egypt to Damascus.
GESHURITES.
A M A L E K I T E S.
River Arnon.
Stream of the brooks.
Wady Beni-Hammad
Zoar, or Bela.
Nahr es Dara
Nahr Assa.
Brook Zered
LONGITUDE EAST



No. IV.
Patent Illuminated Maps.
CANAAN,
AS DIVIDED BY JOSHUA
AMONG
THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL.
From an Original Drawing by W. Hughes.
THE GREAT SEA
MEDITERRANEAN.
Mount Carmel
Japho, or Joppa
Ashkelon
Ziklag
Gerar
Hazar-shual
Moladah
Ramoth of the South
SHUR
Mt. GILEAD.
Ramoth-gilead?
BENJAMIN
LONGITUDE EAST
FROM GREENWICH

polis of the Edomites at the period to which the Map relates (Josephus, Ant. b. iv. c. 4). The remaining portion of the journey, across the brooks Zered and Arnon to the plains of Moab, does not require any particular notice. It may, in conclusion, be observed of all that part of the route which the Map attempts to delineate, that it is such as a people circumstanced as the Israelites were would have been most likely to pursue. The country through which they had to pass does not, indeed, offer much choice in this respect. The roads across the deserts, being *necessarily* marked out by the facilities for obtaining a supply of water, are in most cases the same in modern times that they were anciently, and in all Oriental countries the springs and wells offer stronger evidence of such correspondence than a casual inquirer might at first be induced to imagine. The difference between the hypotheses which have been offered on the subject has arisen chiefly from the want which, until very recently, was strongly felt, of correct information as to the nature and aspect of the country. This being now supplied, much of the doubt, at least in reference to those parts of the journey which had a strictly *definite* object, is cleared up; and it is only those parts that the author has attempted to indicate.

No. IV.

Canaan as divided among the tribes of Israel.

After passing the river Jordan (B.C. 1451) and occupying the next six years in the reduction of the numerous independent kingdoms into which Canaan was then divided, Joshua proceeded to allot to the tribes of the Israelites their respective shares of the land (Joshua xiv.). The general boundaries of the country had been already determined by Moses (Numb. xxxiv.), who had granted to the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and the half tribe of Manasseh, the countries of Bashan and Gilead on the east of the Jordan, which river constituted the proper boundary of the Promised Land. Considerable difference of opinion has prevailed, in reference to the northern boundary, as to whether any part of the territory of the Phœnicians or Sidonians was included in the allotment of the tribe of Asher. From a careful consideration of this question it appears to result, as exhibited in the Map, that "Sidon and its ancient and proper territory were not so included, but that Tyre was."* The southern border drawn from Kadesh-barnea to the River of Egypt (identified by some geographers with the eastern branch of the Nile, but more probably represented by the stream which flows near El Arish),† includes a large tract of country, which, although called desert, the investigations of recent travellers have shown to be not devoid of such qualities as might render it useful as a pasturing-place for the southern tribes.‡ The disproportion which appears between the relative extent of the territories allotted to the tribes ceases to excite surprise when the remark of Josephus is considered, that "such is the nature of the land of Canaan, that one may see large plains, and such as are exceeding fit to produce fruit, which if they were compared with other parts of the country might be reckoned exceeding fruitful; yet in comparison with the fields about Jericho, and those that belong to Jerusalem, they will appear to be of no account at all. * * For which reason Joshua thought the land should be divided by estimation of its goodness rather than its extent: it often happening that one acre of some sort of land was equivalent to a thousand other acres."§ The division thus established continued to be the only one known to the Israelites for a period of upwards of five hundred years, until after the death of Saul. It must not, however, be imagined that they entered at once upon the entire possession of the whole of the land; on the contrary, the wars in which they were engaged with the previous inhabitants, and their efforts to expel them, form the subject of a large portion of the history of this period. The Philistines, in particular, remained in possession of their five lordships.

From the explanation which has been already given of the signs used, it will be seen that the positions of but few of the places indicated in the Map can be regarded as ascertained. At the period to which it relates, Jerusalem appears to have been of little importance compared with the eminence which it afterwards attained. Of the other towns within the Hebrew territory which were then in existence, Accho, now *Acre*, or *Akka*, which in 1820 contained a population of about 10,000,—Shechem (now *Nablous*), with the same number of inhabitants, Japho or Joppa (*Jaffa*), inhabited by from 4000 to 5000 people,—Hebron, now a populous village,—and Gaza, with between 2000 and 3000 inhabitants,—are now the most considerable. Ashdod is reduced to an inconsiderable town,—Bethlehem, a village with only 300 inhabitants; and the sites of Ascalon, Beth-shan, Jericho, Beth-el, and Heshbon, are only indicated by the mouldering remains of buildings. Of the two sites to which the name of Ramoth-gilead has been assigned, that to the north of the river Jabbok, where there are the remains of a castellated stone enclosure called *Ramja*, appears entitled to preference.*

When the changes to which Palestine has for so many ages been subject, both from the operation of physical causes and political events, are duly considered, surprise will rather be felt that so many traces of the names mentioned in the Scriptures should still be found, than that so great a number have perished. The preservation of many of these names is in a great measure due to the Arabs, whose habitual tenacity in this respect is well known; and the probability that a further acquaintance with the topography of the country would bring to our knowledge the existence of many remains which have hitherto been undiscovered is strengthened by the fact, that the latest travellers in Palestine have, in this respect, made some most important contributions to its geography. After the map was engraved, Dr. Robinson published the account of his journey, in which he discovered the site of the patriarchal Beer-Sheba, in a valley now called Wadí-es-Sebá, containing "ruins extending over a space half a mile long by a quarter of a mile broad."† (See the Map of Modern Palestine.) This gentleman also visited the sites of Bethel (now Beit-ín), Eglon (still called 'Ajlán), Beth-Tappuah (Taffúh), Juttah (Yutta), Ekron (now a large village called '*Akir*, where "nothing of antiquity remains"), Gibeon (Jib), Anathoth (Anátah), Gibeah (Jeba'), Micmash (Mukhmás), and Shiloh (Seilún). From a village where they lodged, the sheikh also pointed out to them places which bear, in Arabic, names corresponding to Zorah, Timnath, Sochoh, and others.‡ These contributions to Scriptural geography have been made available as much as was possible in the Map of Modern Palestine.

No. V.

Tribes of Judah, Benjamin, Dan, and Simeon, &c.

The portion of the Holy Land which is contained in this Map, the greater part of which was afterwards comprised in the Kingdom of Judah, while to the student of the Old Testament it possesses deep interest from having been the scene of so many of the transactions recorded in the earlier portions of Scriptural history, is also, from its containing Jerusalem, which has for ages concentrated the interest of Christians in all parts of the civilized world, and Bethlehem, although "little among the thousands of Judah," associated with all the sufferings and triumphs of the Gospel. We have, therefore, thought it desirable to delineate this part of the country upon a larger scale, and in greater detail, than a general Map of Palestine enabled us to do. It embraces the region in which the early life of David was passed, in the performance of the simple duties of a shepherd-boy, and in which he was afterwards hunted "like a hart upon the mountains," and indebted to the diversified nature of its surface for preservation from the fury of his pursuer. Within it are also contained the valley of Sorek, celebrated for the produce of its vineyards, and the brook of Eshcol, from which the spies sent by Moses to examine the land brought back the cluster of grapes which so strikingly evinced its fertility (Numb. xiii. 23, 24). Seeing then, that many of the associations connected with it relate to its external aspect, and to the influence of its natural features upon the character and pursuits of those by whom it was inhabited, a few further remarks upon its physical conformation and appearance may be appropriately introduced here. Neither the mountains of the central chain, nor the hills which, diverging from it and divided by numerous valleys, fill the greater part of the country eastward to the Dead Sea, and westward nearly to the shores of the Mediterranean, rise to any considerable height. This general appearance is described by travellers as being barren and desolate; the valleys are mostly narrow, with steep sides, and almost destitute of soil. The present appearance of Judea thus offers a striking contrast to the notions which are generally entertained of its former fertility. Yet the occasional exceptions to this sterile appearance, which are met with wherever the industry of man has been exercised in preserving and irrigating the scanty soil, justify the remark which has been already made (p. 456), that "such cultivation as Judea anciently received, when the terraced sides of its hills were clad with olives and

* 'Pict. Bible,' Josh. xix. 29; Jud. i. 31, Notes.
† Ibid., Num. xxxiv. 5, Note.
‡ Robinson's 'Biblical Researches in Palestine,' i. sect. 5.
§ 'Antiquities of the Jews,' book v. c. 1.

* 'Pict. Bible,' 2 Kings ix. 1, Note.
† 'Journ. of Royal Geog. Soc.,' vol. ix. p. 297.
‡ Ibid., vol. ix. pp. 302—3.

with vines, and when its hills were waving with corn, might, and did, make it not inferior to any other part of the country, and perhaps superior in variety of produce." From about twenty miles south of Hebron, where the mountains terminate, a more open country, covered with grass and diversified by fields of wheat and barley, extends to Beer-sheba, and beyond that place, after passing some hills, it is described as "open and undulating, with swelling hills, covered in ordinary seasons with grass and rich pasturage."* The country thence continues fertile as far as the limits of Palestine. Such is the nature of that part of the country which was the favourite pasturing place of the Hebrew patriarchs, and which constituted a part of the wilderness of Paran, the abode of David when the transaction occurred which is narrated in the First Book of Samuel. (Chap. xxv.)

Partly in the inheritance of Benjamin, and bounding on the west the valley of Jericho, is a mountainous tract which is described as more stern and wild than any other part of the country, and as being rugged, desolate, and frightful in the extreme. The mountains, which rise to a greater height than any others in Judea, bear the name of *Quarantania*, from a tradition that they were the wilderness in which Christ fasted for forty days; and the highest summit, which bears the name of the Mountain of Temptation, and the ascent of which is exceedingly steep and difficult, is pointed out as that from which the tempter "showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them." (Matt. iv. 8.)

A remarkable characteristic of this part of the country is the great difference of level between its various parts. From the shores of the Mediterranean the country gradually rises towards the central range, the ground on which Jerusalem stands being elevated 2640, and Bethlehem 2528, feet *above* the level of that sea; and the rapidity of the descent thence towards the east may be appreciated from the fact that the north end of the Dead Sea is nearly 1400 feet *below* the same level, leaving the astonishing difference of upwards of 4000 feet between the respective elevation of these points.† Mr. Russegger (by whom these observations were made) also informs us that the village of Riehah, in the valley of Jericho, which corresponds in situation with the Gilgal of our Map, is 774 feet, and the bathing-place of the pilgrims in the Jordan, a few miles to the south-east of the same point, 1269 feet below the level of the Mediterranean. A few remarks upon this valley, which forms a part of the great valley in which the Jordan flows, may be appropriately deferred until the consideration of one of the succeeding *general* maps of the country.

It is satisfactory to find that the position assigned, on argumentative grounds alone, to Engedi, has been confirmed by the discovery, nearly in the same place, of its representative in the name of Ain Jiddi. Dr. Robinson, advancing from the west, obtained a view of the Southern part of the Dead Sea, "from the summit of a precipitous cliff, overhanging Engedi and the lake, at the height of at least 1500 feet." The remains of Ziph, Carmel, and Maon, likewise conspicuous in the history of David, appear still to exist, the first two bearing the names of Dhahrat el Zif, and Karmel.‡

No. VI.

Territories of the Hebrews during the reigns of David and Solomon.

In the dominions of David and Solomon we behold the fulfilment of the promise originally made to Abraham that his posterity should possess the land "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." (Gen. xv. 18.) The period of time from the recognition of David as King over all Israel (B.C. 1055) to the death of Solomon (B.C. 975) may be regarded as constituting, so far as political power is concerned, a distinct portion of the history of the Jews. From their permanent settlement in Canaan to the present time, the student of Scripture has read of them chiefly in connection either with those who were left of the original inhabitants of the land or with the nations immediately bordering on their territories; but we henceforth find them engaged in various relations, military or commercial, with the people of more distant countries, and the object of the curiosity and attention of the princes of other regions. A few explanatory remarks on some of these, which have not yet been noticed, will form a useful accompaniment to the present Map. It is not easy to decide upon the relative situation and extent of the various states into which Syria was at this time divided. Many of those on the north-eastern frontiers of Canaan, mentioned under the names of the Syrians of Damascus, Beth-reehob, Maachah, and Ish-tob, were probably tributary to Zobah, which appears to have been the most powerful of the Syrian kingdoms in the time of David. It is conjectured by the editor of the Pictorial Bible* that its capital may have been the same city as Hobah, mentioned in the history of Abraham as being on the left-hand (north) of Damascus (Gen. xiv. 15). Adjoining it on the north-west was the kingdom of Hamath, which, from the expression "the entering of Hamath" being used to denote the extreme northern frontier of the Hebrew territory, appears also to have extended at some periods to the borders of Canaan. The city of Hamath, its capital, situated on the river Orontes, still preserves the name of Hamah, and is one of the largest towns in Syria, containing a population of 30,000 inhabitants.† As the names of these two states are afterwards combined (2 Chron. viii. 3) into Hamath-zobah, it may be conjectured that they subsequently became united under the same authority. Betah and Berothai, cities belonging to the king of Zobah, which in 1 Chron. xviii. 8 are called Tibhath and Chun, are identified by the Arabic version of the Bible with Emesa and Baalbec. The former of these under the modern name of Homs, is now a well-built town, containing about 10,000 inhabitants, on the great line of route from Aleppo to Damascus; the latter, which is conjectured to be the same as the Baalath of 1 Kings ix. 18, and as such was built by Solomon, has long been celebrated for the beautiful remains of its Temple of the Sun and other buildings.‡ If, however, it was one of the cities of Hadarezer in the time of David, the term 'built' must only be understood in the sense of 'rebuilt,' or 'extended.' South of Zobah were the territories of the Ammonites and Moabites. The capital of the former, which subsequently received the name of Philadelphia, is to be traced in the extensive remains, chiefly of Roman architecture, which occupy a narrow valley, and are still known by the name of Amman.§ Ar, the chief city of Moab, called Areopolis by the Greeks, now consists of ruins of about a mile in circuit, which are situated upon a low hill commanding the plain in which it stands.‖

But the most important accession which the Hebrew territory received during this period, and one which must have exercised considerable influence on the social condition of the nation, was the rocky domain of the Edomites, since it gave them the command of one of the arms of the Red Sea, and of the port of Eziongeber at its extremity. From this port were made, in conjunction with the Phœnicians, those expeditions to Ophir and Tarshish which imported into Judea the productions of distant climates—"gold and silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks, algum (pine) trees and precious stones" (1 Kings x. 11, 22), and which contributed to make silver "nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon."

The long disputed question as to the places to which the names of Ophir and Tarshish are intended to apply is ably and elaborately discussed in the Notes to the Pictorial Bible,¶ and it will be sufficient for our purpose to state the conclusion at which the writer arrives. Adopting the explanation of Gesenius, that the term "ships of Tarshish" denoted vessels originally so called from their being like those in which the Phœnicians traded to Tartessus on the shores of the Atlantic, especially adapted to distant voyages, and that the name "became in process of time so transferred as to denote any distant country to which such ships went," he proceeds to express his acquiescence in the opinion of Professor Heeren, that the term Ophir, "like those of Thule and others, did not designate any fixed place, but simply a certain region of the world, like the names East or West Indies in modern geography. Thus Ophir may be understood as a general name for the rich south country, including the shores of Arabia, Africa, and India."

We cannot conclude the present notice without directing atten-

* 'Journ. of Royal Geogr. Soc.,' p. 297.

† See before, p. 428, and 'Journal of Royal Geogr. Soc.,' vol. vii. p. 456. Professor Berghaus, in a letter to the Secretary, in the ninth volume of the same Journal, states that by the application of numerous bearings to a base line which Professor Robinson measured on the Mount of Olives (which overlooks Jerusalem on the east), he found, that the distance between the mountain and the north-west corner of the Dead Sea does not exceed sixteen and a half English miles. The cliffs by which that sea is bordered on the north-west do not probably exceed one thousand five hundred feet in height ('Hist. of Palest.,' v. i. p. cx.), so that if the distance above stated be correct, the descent of the country between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea is not less than from one hundred and fifty to one hundred and sixty feet per mile. We are aware that in our Map, which was designed before Dr. Robinson's observations were communicated to the public, the distance between these points is much greater than that given above.

‡ Robinson's 'Researches,' ii. 191—195; iii. 196—201.

* Note on 1 Chron. xviii. 3.

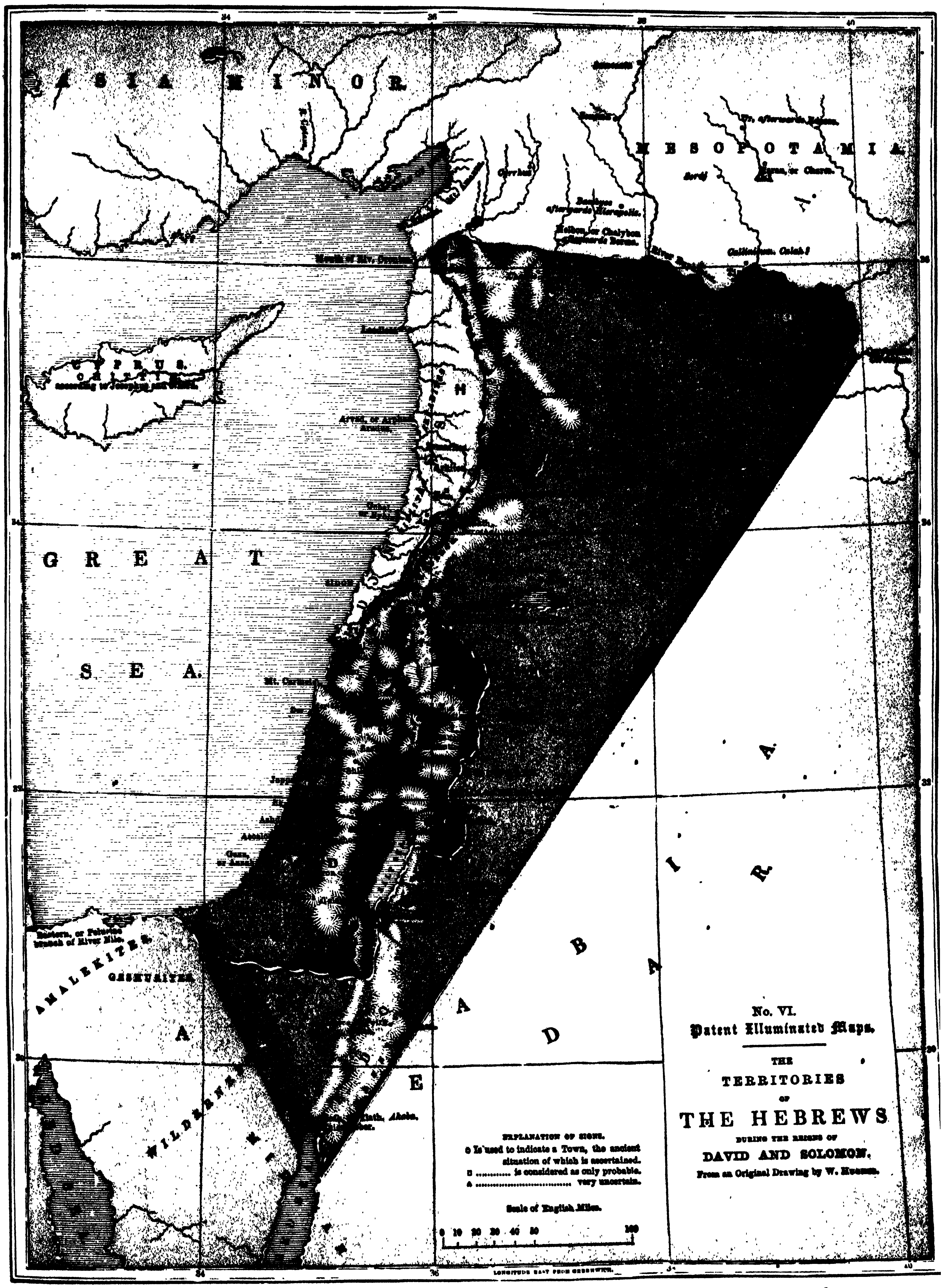
† Burckhardt, 'Travels in Syria,' p. 146.

‡ Maundrel, Irby and Mangles, Wood, Burckhardt, Volney, &c., in 'Modern Traveller.'—Syria.

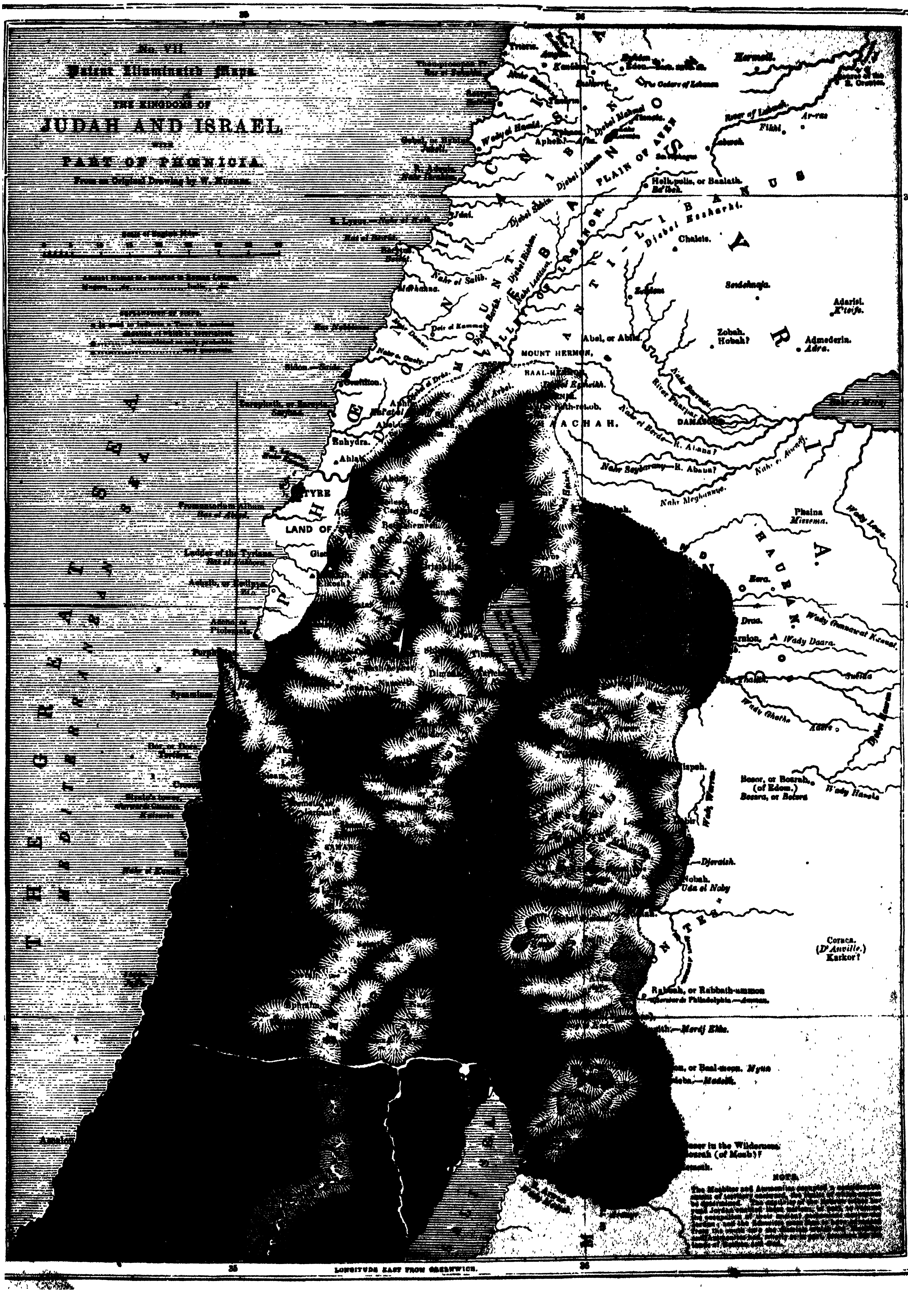
§ Burckhardt, 'Syria,' p. 357.

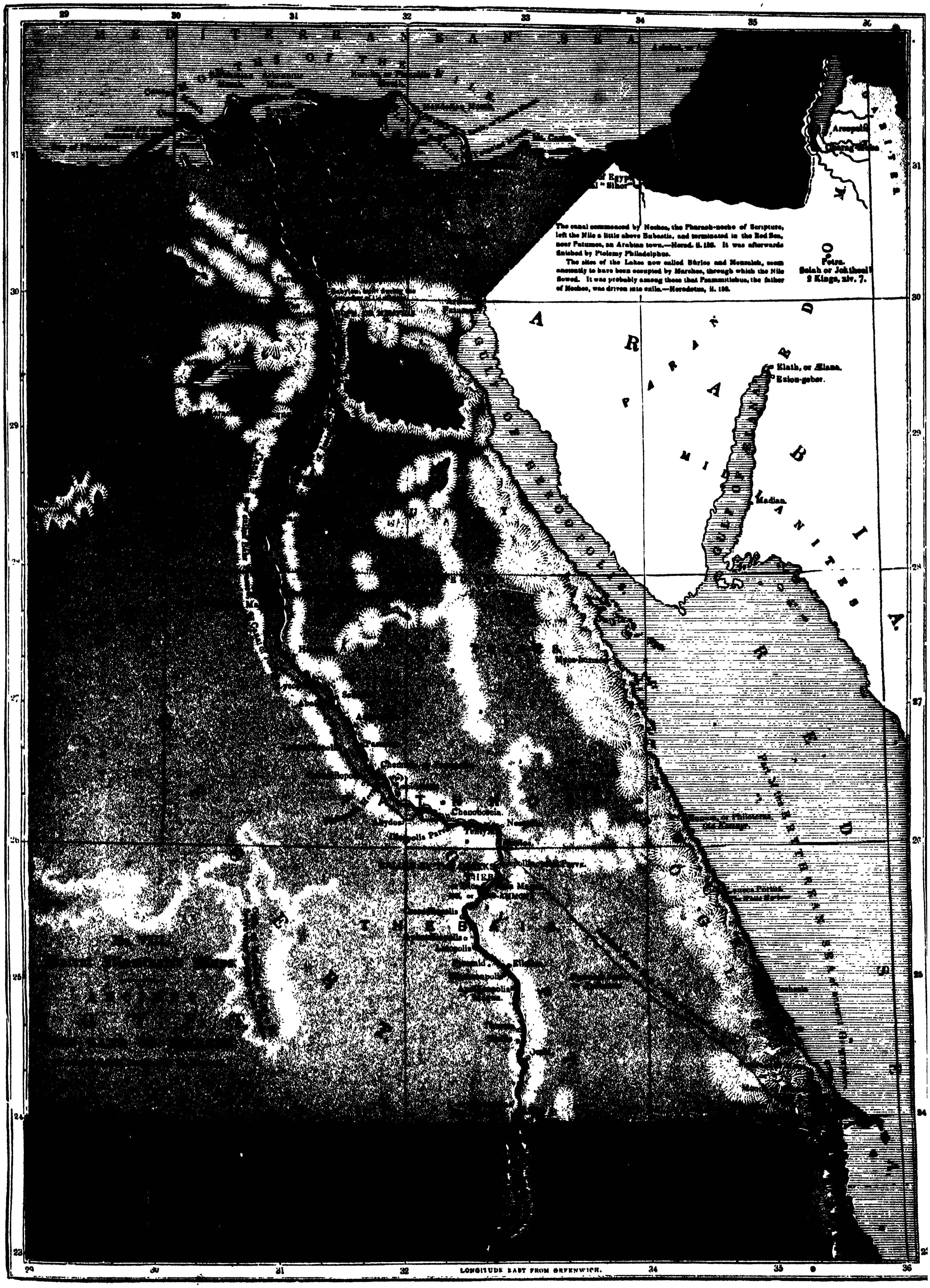
‖ Ibid., p. 377.

¶ 2 Chron. ix. 10; xx. 36.



ASIA MINOR
MESOPOTAMIA
CYPRUS
GREAT SEA
ARABIA
ARABIA DESERTA
AMALEKITES
GESHURITES
WILDERNESS
Mt. Carmel
No. VI.
Patent Illuminated Maps.
THE TERRITORIES OF THE HEBREWS DURING THE REIGNS OF DAVID AND SOLOMON.
From an Original Drawing by W. Hughes.
EXPLANATION OF SIGNS.
o Is used to indicate a Town, the ancient situation of which is ascertained.
☐ .... is considered as only probable.
△ .... very uncertain.
Scale of English Miles.
0 10 20 30 40 50 100
LONGITUDE EAST FROM GREENWICH.


No. VII.
THE KINGDOMS OF
JUDAH AND ISRAEL,
WITH
PART OF PHŒNICIA.
MOUNT HERMON
DAMASCUS
TYRE
LAND OF
Abel, or Abila
Zobah.
Hobah?
Admederia.
Adra.
Chalcis.
Adarisi.
PLAIN OF AVEN
Nahr el Berde
Phaina
Missema.
HAURAN
Bosor, or Bostrah,
(of Edom.)
Bosora, or Bolsra
Coraca.
(D'Anville.)
Karkor?
Rabbah, or Rabbath-ammon
Djeraish.
Nobah.
Uda el Noby
LONGITUDE EAST FROM GREENWICH.



The canal commenced by Nechos, the Pharaoh-necho of Scripture, left the Nile a little above Bubastis, and terminated in the Red Sea, near Patumos, an Arabian town.—Herod. ii. 158. It was afterwards finished by Ptolemy Philadelphus.
The sites of the Lakes now called Bûrlos and Menzaleh, seem anciently to have been occupied by Marshes, through which the Nile flowed. It was probably among these that Psammitichus, the father of Nechos, was driven into exile.—Herodotus, ii. 152.
Petra.
Selah or Joktheel?
2 Kings, xiv. 7.
Elath, or Ælana.
Ezion-geber.
Madian.
Chenoboscia.
LONGITUDE EAST FROM GREENWICH.

tion to Palmyra, universally admitted to be the "Tadmor in the wilderness" founded by Solomon (1 Kings ix. 18) and known by that name alone to the Arabs of the present day. Its situation in a small oasis of the desert, abundantly supplied with springs of wholesome water, probably rendered it from the earliest times a place of resort to those caravans which conveyed the produce of the East to Phœnicia, and Asia Minor. Its position on the great line of route from Babylon westward to Damascus, Tyre, and Sidon, which in such a country is of necessity determined by the existence of springs from which a supply of water may be obtained, was calculated to render it a commercial station of the first importance, and was not likely to escape the notice of the enterprising monarch of the Jews, under whom it became, and long continued, the emporium of the land-trade between Eastern and Western Asia. The usual approach to its remains is from the west, through a valley about two miles long, which contains the sepulchres of the ancient inhabitants, and at the termination of which thousands of Corinthian pillars of white marble burst upon the sight, standing isolated in the vast and level desert which extends thence to the Euphrates. The principal remains are those of a Temple of the Sun, the square court enclosing which measures six hundred and seventy-nine feet each way, and part of which is now occupied by a small village inhabited by a few Arabs.

Although the existing ruins of Palmyra and Baalbec belong undoubtedly to a much later time than that of Solomon, yet the fact of their foundation by him, together with the foreign trade which he carried on by sea, lead us to form a high idea of the talent and enterprise of the monarch under whom "Judah and Israel were many as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking and making merry." (1 Kings iv. 20.)

No. VII.

Kingdoms of Judah and Israel, with part of Phœnicia.

The division of the Promised Land into the two independent kingdoms of Judah and Israel, by the alienation of the ten tribes from the house of David (B.C. 975), the latter of which was terminated by Shalmaneser (B.C. 721), and the former finally destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar (B.C. 588), was the commencement of another era in the civil and ecclesiastical history of the Jews which thenceforward is carried on in two distinct and parallel courses, and no longer possesses the singleness of interest by which it has hitherto been generally characterised. Some difficulty has been felt in drawing the boundary line between the two nations, arising from the fact that while in all cases *ten* tribes are said to have been separated from the house of David, and *one* only to have been left to the son of Solomon (1 Kings xi. 13, 32, 35, 36; 2 Kings xvii. 18), several of the cities which were in the inheritance of Benjamin appear from the succeeding history to have been included in the kingdom of Judah, and these two tribes are frequently mentioned together in such a manner as to show their alliance (1 Kings xii. 21, 23; 2 Chron. xi. 1, 12). We find also (2 Kings xxiii. 8) the expression, "from Geba to Beersheba," which distinctly indicates the extent of the kingdom of Judah, in the same manner as "from Dan to Beersheba" does that of the whole country. Probably, however, the tribes of Benjamin were divided in their interest, some of them adhering to the house of Israel and some to that of Judah, which is rendered the more likely from the circumstance that some of their cities seem sometimes to have been in the possession of one and sometimes the other of these kingdoms (1 Kings xvi. 34; 2 Chron. xxviii. 15); and others are mentioned in such a manner as to imply that they were on the frontiers of each (1 Kings xv. 17, 22). The tribe of Simeon, which was originally within the inheritance of Judah, was probably of too little importance to be mentioned in connexion with that powerful and favoured house. Among the consequences attendant on the establishment of another kingdom was the choice of a capital. Tirzah appears to have served for this purpose until the reign of Omri, who laid the foundation of Samaria (1 Kings xvi. 24). The latter city, which, as the capital of Israel, is afterwards brought conspicuously under our notice, was destroyed by Shalmaneser, but seems to have been soon afterwards rebuilt: it was taken by Alexander the Great, and endured various fluctuations of fortune, until entirely destroyed by John Hyrcanus (B.C. 110); being again rebuilt under the Romans, it remained of little importance until Herod the Great (B.C. 21) gave it the name of Sebaste, and adorned it with many splendid erections.* Passing afterwards in succession into the hands of the various possessors of the country, it is now represented by a poor village containing about thirty dwellings, many of which are built of the fragments of former edifices, which are plentifully scattered about.

* Jos. Antiq. b. xv. c. 8.

This Map is intentionally made to include the greater part of the country occupied by the ancient Phœnicians, whose intimate connexion with the Jews gives to them considerable Scriptural interest. Their territory, which at the period of their greatest importance did not exceed from one hundred and fifty to one hundred and seventy miles in length, with an average breadth of about twenty miles, was confined between the sea and Mount Lebanon, the branches of which, advancing to the shore, leave a plain of varying width, sometimes not exceeding a mile, between themselves and the coast, reaching it in some places, and terminating in bold and rocky promontories. Of the numerous important towns contained in this strip of land, Tyre was that which attained the greatest celebrity. It is important for the student to bear in mind that old Tyre, the city of which Hiram was king, the greatness of which forms so frequent a theme of the prophets, and which was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, was situated on the continent, while the Tyre, which afterwards withstood for eight months the arms of Alexander, was originally built on an island, which he joined by a mole or causeway to the mainland. As any attempt to trace its condition through its varying fortunes would far exceed our limits here, we shall only observe that, after being successively in the hands of the Babylonians, the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Saracens, the Crusaders, and the Turks, it is now, under the name of Súr, a wretched fishing-town, which in 1817 contained about five thousand inhabitants.* To the testimonies of the accordance of its present condition with that predicted by the prophetic writers which have been collected in the Pictorial Bible,† may be added the more recent one of the Count de Berton, who observes that "the best description of its actual state is that given by the prophets themselves."‡ Sidon, which existed long previous to Tyre, and was already designated by the term "great" when the Israelites entered the Promised Land (Josh. xix. 28), passed through similar changes of fortune to that town, with which its history is closely connected. It is now, under the name of Saide, a respectable town for the country, carrying on some trade with the neighbouring coast, with about fifteen thousand inhabitants.§ Berytus, once celebrated for its institutions for the study of civil law, is now called Beirût, and has a population of about ten thousand. Byblus, the Gebal of Scripture, the seat of the Giblites (Jos. xiii. 5; Ezek. xxvii. 9), bearing the modern name of Jebail, is a small town, around which are many traces of ancient buildings.

During the period to which this Map relates, Damascus appears to have grown into greater importance than it had hitherto attained, and to have become the capital of that "kingdom of Syria" with which the Jews were so often engaged in warfare. This city, which was founded before the time of Abraham (Gen. xiv. 15), has preserved a considerable share of importance through all the changes to which, with the other towns of Syria, it has been subject. It is now one of the largest towns in Syria, and, surrounded for a distance of several miles by well-watered gardens and fruitful orchards, is regarded as a terrestrial paradise by the neighbouring Arabs, by whom it is called El-Sham, and who expatiate with delight on the beauties of the district in which it is situated. Its population is usually estimated at about 150,000.‖ It is the annual rendezvous of the great Syrian pilgrim-caravan, which proceeds thence to Mecca, a circumstance which greatly contributes to its prosperity. The river Barrada, to the waters of which the fertility of its gardens is owing, was doubtless one of those streams which Naaman thought "better than all the waters of Israel" (2 Kings v. 12), and one of its tributary branches was probably the other; but it is now impossible to determine to which the names of either Abana or Pharpar apply. The name of the Nahr *Seybarany*, which joins the Barrada after it had passed through Damascus, appears to bear some similarity to that of Abana, a circumstance which may perhaps sanction a *conjecture* as to their correspondence.

No. VIII.

Ancient Egypt.

The frequent mention of Egypt in the Scriptures, and the continual connexion preserved with its inhabitants by the Hebrew

* Jolliffe, 'Letters from Palestine,' vol. i. p. 16. † Note on Ezek. xxvi. 5.
‡ 'Journ. of Royal Geogr. Soc.,' vol. ix. p. 290.
§ 'Modern Traveller—Syria,' vol. i. p. 57,
‖ Ibid., vol. ii. p. 42. Burckhardt, however, in 1814, estimated it at 250,000. 'Travels in Arabia,' vol. i. p. 241.

people, from the time of their forefather Abraham to their dispersion by the Romans, appear to render a Map exhibiting the ancient condition of that country a necessary appendage to a Scriptural Atlas. As, however, the interest which it thus derives is only *incidental* to the main purpose of this work, it is merely intended in the present notice to offer a few such remarks as may assist in conveying a clear idea of the nature of the country, leaving it to the Map to show the generally received identifications of Scriptural with classical localities, and referring for a description of their remains to the numerous and easily accessible accounts of modern Egypt.

The prominent feature of Egypt is the river Nile, which, flowing through the country from south to north, anciently reached the Mediterranean by seven mouths, of which two (the Bolbitinian and Bucolic) were artificial, the others natural (Herod. ii. 17). Of these arms of the river only two remain in the present day, although the former course of the others can to a great extent be still traced. The valley in which the Nile flows, and the tract over which its branches extend in the lower part of its course, are all that really constitute Egypt, although under that appellation are usually included the deserts which stretch thence eastward to the Red Sea, and westward towards the great desert of Libya. Recent investigations have shown these deserts to differ in many respects from the notions previously entertained of them; the leading characteristic of that to the right of the Nile is its gradual *ascent* eastward from the rocks which bound the valley of the river to an elevated plain of considerable breadth, from which it again slopes down towards the Red Sea. It is traversed in a direction from north to south by ranges of limestone and granitic mountains, the latter of which, commencing in lat. 28° 26′, and attaining in one place (lat. 28° 10′, about 32° 50′ long.) an elevation of 6000 feet, continue in a southerly direction until they cross the Nile at Syene (Assuan), forming what are called the cataracts, but which are really only a succession of rapids, of which no single fall is more than four or five feet. The desert to the west consists of an *elevated plain*, for the most part level, but supporting in some places limestone mountains, which forms a part of the great table-land of North-eastern Africa, and in which the province of Faioum (containing the lake Mœris), and the Oases, are depressions. The province of Faioum is distinguished by a *greater depression* than the Oases, the lake Mœris being about 100 or 120 feet *below* the level of the banks of the Nile at Benisûef (lat. 29° 10′).*

The well-known fertility of Egypt, which caused it to be anciently regarded as the granary of the surrounding countries, is entirely due to the periodical rising of the Nile, which inundates the land on either side of it. The river, swelled by the annual rains of the Abyssinian mountains, which contain its source, begins to rise about the middle of June, and attains its greatest height at the end of September; it remains in this state until the middle of October, when it begins gradually to subside. As the extent of land which can be cultivated is entirely dependent upon the alluvial soil deposited by the river in its annual inundations, it is gratifying to find that Sir J. Wilkinson, in the paper already referred to, has satisfactorily proved that this, far from diminishing, is, on the contrary, constantly increasing, and that the fears which have been entertained lest the progressive elevation of the country to the east and west of the river should ultimately prevent it from being covered by the water, and thus consign it to sterility, are totally groundless, since the *bed of the river* always rising in proportion to the elevation of the adjacent soil, and the edge of the desert, consisting of clay and stony ground, *sloping gradually* from the mountains on either hand towards the river, the waters of each successive inundation are, in fact, enabled to reach over a greater extent than were those of the preceding. The encroachments of the sand on the valley of the river are also shown to be only partial, occurring merely at a few openings in the bordering chains of mountains, so that "taking into consideration the relative advance of the sand and of the alluvial deposit, the balance is greatly in favour of the latter, and the result is, that, whatever partial injury the sand may have it in its power to inflict upon certain spots, the extent of the land is constantly increasing, and the number of square miles of arable soil is much greater now than at any previous period."† The physical conformation of Egypt does not therefore offer any obstacles to its attaining in modern times a position which, if it will not rival, will at least not disgrace the celebrity of its antiquity.

The separation of the country into Upper and Lower Egypt which our Map exhibits, as it is the most obvious, was probably the earliest of its divisions; although it was afterwards separated into three provinces, consisting of Lower Egypt, from the sea to the head of the Delta, and including the city of Heliopolis within its limits;—Heptanomis or Middle Egypt, the capital of which was Memphis, extending thence to the Thebaica Phylace (lat. 27° 35′);—and the Thebaid or Upper Egypt, which, comprehending the city of Thebes, occupied the remainder of the country. These provinces were subdivided into *nomes*, which took their names from the chief city they contained, and the number of which is variously stated by ancient writers. Memphis, sometimes mentioned under the name of Noph (Jer. ii. 16; xlvi. 19), which during the residence of the Israelites in Egypt was probably the capital of that part of the country with which they were most closely connected, was the metropolis of the land during the remaining period over which the Old Testament history extends, although its rank in this respect was posterior to that of Thebes, the more ancient and celebrated capital.

* 'On the Nile, and the Present and Former Levels of Egypt.' By Sir J. Gardner Wilkinson. 'Journ. of Royal Geogr. Soc.,' vol. ix. p. 431.

† Ibid., p. 439.

No. IX.

Assyria, Chaldæa, and Media, &c., during the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires.

The chief interest which these countries possess at this period for the student of the Bible arises from their being those to which the inhabitants of Israel and Judah were carried into captivity by the monarchs of Assyria and Babylon (2 Kings xv. 29; xvii. 6; xxiv. 14, 15).

From the manner in which the names of Assyria, Chaldæa, and Babylonia are used by ancient authors, sacred as well as profane, it is evident that these terms are intended to designate in some places different tracts of country from those to which at other times they are applied, being used as the occasion required in an extended or a more limited sense. It is necessary to bear this in mind in order to understand the narratives in which they occur. The name Assyria appears originally to have designated only a small tract of country, which has been conjectured to correspond with the Aturia of Strabo and Dio Cassius. At a later period, with the extension of the Assyrian power, the name was applied to a larger extent of territory on the east of the Tigris; *this*, as Major Rennell remarks, "the country *beyond* the Tigris and south of Taurus, and of which Nineveh was the capital, is that designated in the Scriptures by the name of Kir (2 Kings xvi. 9)."* Subsequently, however, the Assyria of Herodotus (b. i. 106, 178; iii. 92) and Strabo (b. xvi.) must be regarded as comprehending not only Assyria Proper but also Mesopotamia and Babylonia, and sometimes even Syria (Herod. vii 63.). The dominions of the king of Assyria, as understood in the Second Book of Kings (xvii. 6, &c.), and in Josephus (Antiq. book ix. c. 2.), in addition to Assyria, in the sense last explained, included also Media.† In a similar manner the Chaldæa or land of the Chaldæans of Scripture (Isa. xxiii. 13; Jer xxiv. 5, &c.), appears to have anciently extended much farther to the north than the Chaldæa Proper of later geography, even if it did not include that "Ur of the Chaldees," to which the name was, without doubt, first applied.‡ The Chaldæa of Ptolemy and Strabo was that part of Babylonia which bordered on the Persian Gulf and the Arabian desert, and which included the city of Ur or Urchoe, perhaps so named in memory of the original settlements of the Chaldæans. Babylonia, again, is sometimes used synonymously with Chaldæa, in the extended sense (Herod. iii. 92), and at others applied to the district in which Babylon was situated (Dan. iii. 1).

The subject of the settlement of the Jewish tribes, when carried into captivity into Media, has been fully considered by Major Rennell,§ and the conclusions at which he has arrived are those exhibited in the present Map. Of the places mentioned (2 Kings xvii. 24) as those from which the king of Assyria removed the inhabitants to the cities of Samaria, Hamath has by some been identified with the Syrian kingdom of that name, which has already passed under our notice: but, as Josephus states (Ant. ix. 14) that the foreigners removed were five tribes of Cuthites, it seems more probable that it denotes some place in Assyria or Khuzistán.‖

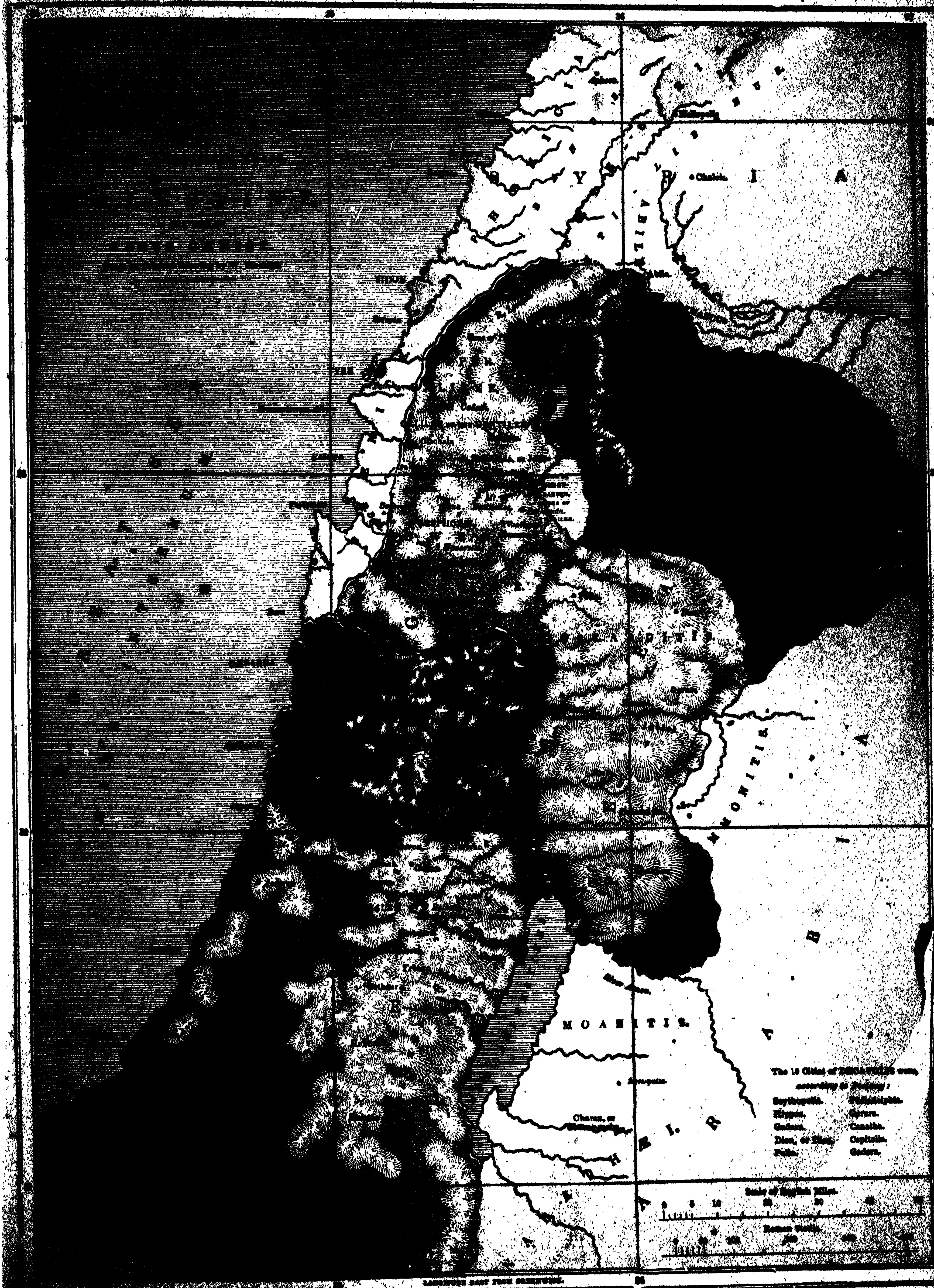
An exceedingly valuable contribution to the geography (both ancient and modern) of Elymais and Susiana, the modern Luristán and Khuzistán, has been recently given to the public by Major Rawlinson, in a paper entitled 'Notes on a march from Zoháb, at the foot of Zagros, along the mountains to Khuzistán, and from

* 'Geography of Herodotus,' vol. i. p. 515. † Ibid., vol. i. p. 518.

‡ Josephus, Antiq., book i. c. 7. § 'Geography of Herodotus,' c. xv.

‖ Note on 2 Kings xvii. 24. 'Pict. Bible.'


CASPIAN
OR HYRCANIAN
SEA
MARDI
PERSIAN GULF
LONGITUDE EAST
FROM GREENWICH


MOABITIS

thence through the province of Luristán to Kirmánsháh, in the year 1836."* In this memoir Major Rawlinson has examined every point of interest connected with the historical geography of these regions, and has for the first time enabled us to delineate correctly the courses of the rivers Kerah, Karún, Dizfúl, and their numerous tributary streams. Such of his conclusions as seemed applicable to our purpose have been adopted in the present Map, and, as most of the questions investigated relate to a period subsequent to that with which we are now engaged, it is needless to enter into any further explanation of them than is afforded by it.

But few traces now remain of the numerous flourishing cities which Assyria and Chaldæa once contained, and even the situations of the chief of them have afforded matter for dispute. Nineveh, which, according to ancient writers, once measured 480 stadia, or upwards of 50 English miles, in circuit, whose walls, fortified by 1500 towers, were wide enough to admit of three chariots being driven upon them abreast,—is now traced with difficulty in the extensive mounds of earth and heaps of rubbish which line the eastern bank of the Tigris, opposite the modern town of Mósul. On one of the central mounds is a Mohammedan village, around a tomb which is alleged to be that of the prophet Jonah. These remains have been fully described by Sir John Kinneir, Mr. Buckingham, Mr. Rich, and, more recently, by Mr. Layard. The latter gentleman, in connection with M. Botta, and by himself, has explored several of the mounds, which are of enormous extent; and has discovered in them the remains of magnificent temples and palaces, adorned with bas-reliefs and sculptures, many specimens of which have been brought to this country, and are now to be seen at the British Museum; they afford proofs of the high state of the arts in Nineveh, and of the wealth and civilization of the people.

A variety of evidence concurs in fixing the site of Babylon at some of the ruins which are found on both sides of the Euphrates in the neighbourhood of the modern town of Hillah; but the position which it occupied among them, and the portion which it included, have been much-disputed questions. We have adopted the view taken in the Pictorial Bible † and the Penny Cyclopædia,‡ to which we may refer for a fuller account of the former condition of this city, and of its present remains, than our limits enable us to give. Its circuit, according to Herodotus (b. i. c. 178), was the same as that of Nineveh, from which, however, it differed in being exactly square, each side measuring 120 stadia. Besides a deep ditch, lined with brickwork, it was encompassed with a wall of 200 cubits (300 feet) in height, each side of which contained 25 gates made of solid brass. The river ran through the city, and its sides were likewise lined with walls, from which smaller gates of brass opened a descent to the water. These two parts of the city were united by a bridge; in one stood the royal palace, and in the other the temple of Jupiter Belus. The city was divided into squares by streets which ran in straight lines from one side to the other, intersecting each other at right angles. The Temple of Belus, which was 500 feet in height, on a base of the same length and breadth, is generally supposed to have been erected on the site of the earlier Tower of Babel, and is thought to be now represented by the colossal ruin called the Birs Nimrúd. This pile, which is about six miles south-west of Hillah, is described by Mr. Rich as a mound of an oblong form, the circumference of which is 762 yards. "At the eastern side it is cloven by a deep furrow, and is not more than fifty or sixty feet high; but at the western end it rises in a conical figure to the elevation of 198 feet, and on its summit is a solid pile of brick, thirty-seven feet high by twenty-eight in breadth. . . . . The other parts of the summits of this hill are occupied by immense fragments of brick-work of no determinate figure, tumbled together and converted into solid vitrified masses, the layers of the bricks being perfectly discernible."§ The whole of the mound on which these ruins stand is itself a ruin, strewed with fragments of stone. In its eastern parts, layers of sun-dried bricks are to be seen. Five miles to the north of Hillah, and 950 yards from the river, is the mound called the Mujelíbeh (overturned), considered by some writers to represent the tower of Babel. Its four sides, which face the cardinal points, are respectively 219, 200, 186, and 182 yards in length, and its south-east angle is 141 feet in height. Its sides are worn into furrows by the weather. "The summit is covered with heaps of rubbish, in digging into some of which layers of broken burnt brick, cemented with mortar, were discovered, and whole bricks with inscriptions on them are here and there found. The whole is covered with innumerable fragments of pottery, brick, bitumen, pebbles, scoriæ, and even shells, bits of glass, and mother-of-pearl."* The principal other ruins are an irregular mass, measuring 1100 yards in length by 800 in breadth, known by the name of the Amran, from a building so called on its summit; and, to the north of this, another heap called the Kasr (palace), which measures 700 yards in length and breadth, and is connected with the Amran by a ridge of considerable height. The two latter mounds extend along the east bank of the river *between* the town of Hillah and the Mujelíbeh. Such are the principal remains of "Great Babylon." That there is not more remaining of the superstructure of its walls and other erections is partly to be attributed to the custom of employing all the available materials which are found in the ruins of one city in the erection of others, a plan which has doubtless been pursued by the inhabitants of the country in building those which have succeeded one another as the seats of sovereign power in these regions. There are many other mounds, similar in general appearance to those above described, in various parts of the plain of Chaldæa. One of the principal of these, the Tel Nimrúd (the supposed Accad of Nimrod's kingdom), near the Tigris, attains a height of 130 feet: and another, the Mugeiyer, south of the Euphrates, rises upwards of 200 feet:† the general features of all are the same —huge and desolate masses of ruin, consisting of sun-burnt brick and rubbish of various kinds—the enduring monuments of fallen greatness. Thus completely have the prophetic denunciations against Babylon been fulfilled, and "her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness!" (Jer. li. 43.)

No. X.

Palestine in the Time of Jesus Christ.

The extensive kingdom of Herod the Great, which embraced, in addition to the whole of Palestine, portions of Syria or Arabia, was divided at his death, with the approbation of the Roman emperor, into three parts; the kingdom of Judea, including Samaria and Idumea, being given to Archelaus, with the title of Ethnarch; Galilee and Pera being subjected to Herod Antipas, with the title of Tetrarch; and Gaulonitis, Batanea, Paneas Auranitis, and Trachonitis being given to Philip, with the same denomination (Luke iii. 1; Jos. Antiq. xvii. 11). This distribution continued until (A.D. 12) Archelaus was deposed by the Emperor Augustus, and his dominions united the province of Syria, while Judea itself was placed under the authority of a procurator. It remained under this form of government until (A.D. 43) the whole of Herod's dominions were again united under the authority of his grandson, Herod Agrippa, the "Herod the King" of Acts xii. 1, subject of course to the control of the general governor of the province of Syria (Jos. Ant. xix. 5). Of the divisions enumerated, the best description which we possess is that given by the historian Josephus (Wars, iii. 3), who describes the extent and magnitude of each province. In the application of his description to the construction of a map, considerable difficulty is however felt from our inability to fix the position of some of the places which he mentions as indications of the extreme length or breadth of these divisions, a purpose which in *his* day they no doubt fully answered. This is more particularly felt with reference to the southern boundary of Judea which separated it from Idumea; we have therefore preferred leaving this unrepresented in the map, supplying in its place the explanation that the Edomites had, during the captivity of the Jews and their weakened condition after their return, extended their dominion over the whole of the country, from the mountains of Seir to the Mediterranean, making Hebron the capital of this part of their territories, the Idumea of the classical authors. Jerusalem was thus, as Josephus remarks, "situated in the very middle of Judea." This province was likewise subdivided into *eleven* toparchies (or, according to Pliny, Hist. Nat. v. 15, *ten*), which, judging from the proximity of the cities presiding over them, were of small extent (Jos. ibid.; 1 Mac. xi. 34).

It would far exceed our limits to attempt to give any description, however brief, of the many places which are interesting from their being associated with events in the life of the founder of Christianity. We may refer for this to the Notes to the Pictorial Bible, the editor of which has carefully collected the most important circumstances relating to the past and present condition of such places, and, leaving

* 'Journ. of Royal Geogr. Soc.,' vol. ix. p. 26.
† Notes on Gen. xi. 4; Dan. iv. 30. ‡ Art. 'Babylon.'
§ Rich's 'Memoir on the Ruins of Babylon,' p. 30.

* Rich's 'Memoir on the Ruins of Babylon,' p. 29.
† 'Researches in Assyria,' p. 127.

it to the Map to show their localities, as far as they can be ascertained, confine ourselves to a few remarks on those points on which some explanation seems requisite.

It has been generally supposed that Bethsaida of Galilee (John xii. 21) was the city of that name which was situated on the Lake of Tiberias, near the spot where it receives the Jordan, and to which Philip the tetrarch gave the name of Julius, after advancing it from a village to the dignity of a city;* but, as it has been urged that this city was not in Galilee, but on the opposite side of the Jordan, in Gaulonitis, some writers have thought that the ruins of a large village called Beït-sida, seen by Pococke on the west of the lake, represent the Bethsaida of the Gospel. The site of each is therefore indicated in our Map.

There are now few traces to be found of the many towns and villages which, in the time of Christ, surrounded the Lake of Tiberias. Extensive ruins near its north-western extremity, bearing the name of Tel-hewm, have been supposed by some travellers to mark the site of Capernaum;† but as they appear to have belonged to a place of greater size and importance than there is reason to suppose Capernaum to have been, we have preferred placing it near a fine spring called by Burckhardt Aien el Tin, which appears to correspond with the description given by Josephus of the "fountain of Capharnaum."‡ A recent traveller§ informs us that no trace of the names of this place or Chorazin now remains among the Arab population; a remark which equally applies, we believe, to Magdala and Dalmanutha (Mat. xv. 39; Mark viii. 10), unless the former be found in the ruins of an old tower and some other buildings of rude construction called El Mejdel,‖ near the centre of the western shore of the lake.

The site of Bethabara (John i. 28), which in the time of Jerome continued to be pointed out on the banks of the Jordan, is not now known. It is supposed to have been a few miles above the spot where that river falls into the Dead Sea.

The political metropolis of Palestine in the time of Christ was Cæsarea, the city in which the Apostle Paul pleaded before Festus and Agrippa. From an obscure fortress called Strato's Tower, this place was in the short space of ten years raised to the utmost magnificence and splendour by Herod, who made it his residence, adorning it with temples and palaces, a theatre, an amphitheatre, and other buildings of the most gorgeous description, and by the construction of an immense mole which ran out into the sea, rendering it the best harbour on the coast.¶ It was still a place of importance in the time of the Crusaders; but declined rapidly after their expulsion, and has long since been a mass of ruins, no human being residing within many miles of its desolate site.** The city of the same name in the north of Palestine, to which was added the distinctive epithet of Philippi, is supposed to have been the Dan or Laish of the Old Testament (Jud. xviii. 7). It was greatly enlarged and embellished by Herod the Tetrarch, who changed its name from Paneas to Cæsarea-Philippi in honour of the Emperor Tiberius: its modern representative, Banias, is a small village, which, according to Burckhardt, does not contain more than 150 houses.

No. XI.

Ancient Jerusalem and the Surrounding District.

The best and indeed the only authentic description of Ancient Jerusalem which we possess is that given by Josephus, in his history of the war which terminated in its destruction (Wars, b. v. c. iv.). We have, accordingly, with the assistance of the most accurate representations of the modern city, made his description the basis of the present Plan, adopting the extent of thirty-three furlongs, which he assigns to its circuit, in preference to the statements of other writers who variously estimate it at from twenty-seven to fifty furlongs.†† Of the internal distribution of the city into streets, &c., we know absolutely *nothing* but what is to be collected from a few scattered statements in the writings of the same historian, and in the Bible; and those few are, we believe, embodied in the Plan and the Note by which it is accompanied. It has therefore appeared desirable to omit entirely the merely conjectural details which appear in the Plans of Jerusalem given in most Scripture Atlases, confining it strictly to that for which we have the authority of history; —the meagreness of the representation thus afforded being itself the most striking evidence of the changes which this city has undergone since the time when Mount Zion was "the joy of the whole earth" (Psalm xlviii. 2).

The varying fortunes to which Jerusalem has been subject from the period of its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar to the time of Christ, and again from its demolition by the Romans to the present day, are subjects which belong to history, and do not require to be considered here: we shall, probably, render greater service to the Scriptural reader by a few such remarks upon the topography of its neighbourhood as may assist the Plan in conveying to his mind an idea of what it once was. Previous to the inclusion of Bezetha, Jerusalem stood upon three hills, or, more properly, three portions of a mass of hill which constitute the southward termination of a rocky plain extending to the north. The part called Bezetha, although gradually built upon as the city grew more populous and extended beyond its old limits, was not enclosed with a wall until *after* the time of Christ (A.D. 42). Of the hills by which the city is on three sides surrounded, that on the west is but little elevated above the city itself; while, on the south, what is now called the Hill of Evil Counsel (from the improbable supposition that the house of Caiaphas, where the chief priests and scribes took counsel against Christ, stood on the top of it) is really a rocky flat, forming the termination of the high ground to the south of Jerusalem, and is *lower* than Mount Zion. On the East, the Mount of Olives rises higher than any of the ground about Jerusalem, and completely overlooks the city; from its summit the extensive prospect to the east embraces the valley of Jericho, the lower part of the river Jordan, and the Dead Sea, with its enclosing mountains.

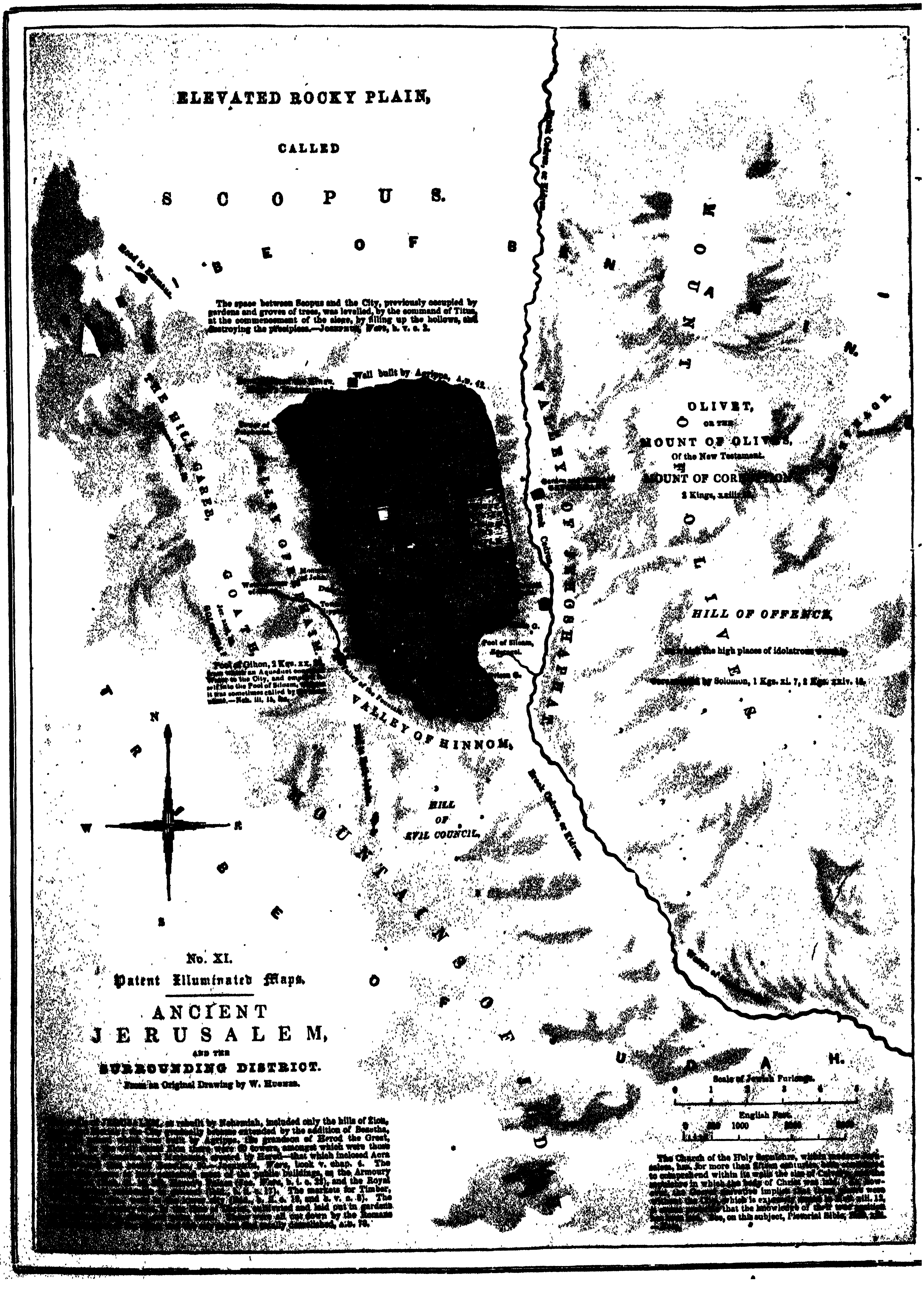
The valley of Jehoshaphat, which rarely exceeds 200 yards in width, is described as "rather a ravine than a valley:" the brook Kedron, which flows through it in a narrow and deep bed, crossed by a bridge of a single arch, is a mere winter-torrent, is little more than a yard in breadth, and dry during the greater part of the year. The sides of this valley are covered with the sepulchral stones of the Jews, by whom, both in ancient and modern times, it has been used as a place of interment. The valley of Hinnom, on the south, is about fifty yards broad and twenty in depth, "measuring from the bottom to the highest part of Mount Zion:" * its sides are rocky and precipitous, and that to the south contains numerous sepulchral excavations. On the farther side of this valley, towards the south-east, is the spot supposed to be Aceldama, or "the field of blood" (Matt. xxvii. 8), bought with the thirty pieces of silver, which were the price of Judas's treason, for a "field to bury strangers in." The Valley of Gihon, by some also considered as the Valley of Rephaim, on the west of the city, is shallow, and in its southern part broad, decreasing both in width and depth as it advances northward; it also contains on its western side some sepulchral excavations.

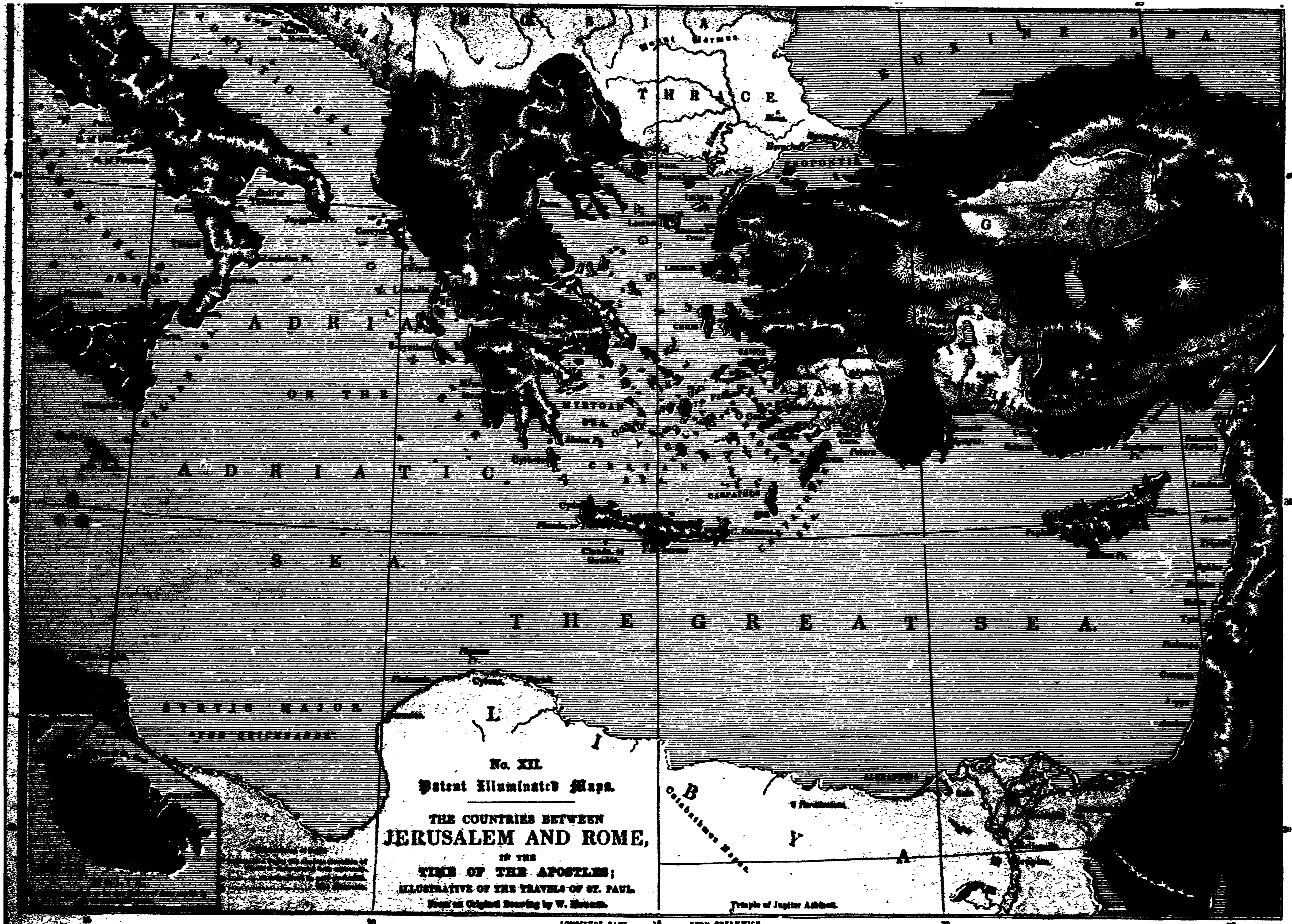
Of *modern* Jerusalem, which has been so repeatedly described by travellers, it is not our purpose here to speak. It will be seen from the Plan that we agree with those † who reject the long-received opinion that the present church of the Holy Sepulchre covers the spot upon which Christ was crucified, and the tomb in which his body was laid; we therefore attach no *Scriptural* interest to the many places within the city which are pointed out to the pilgrim as the representatives of the sacred spots. The garden of Gethsemane appears to indicate correctly the place which was the accustomed resort of Christ and his disciples, and in which he was betrayed (John xviii. 1). It is now an even plot of ground, enclosed with a stone fence, and containing a few olive-trees. Bethany is now a poor village, inhabited by a few Arabs: it is pleasantly and romantically situated, sheltered by the Mount of Olives, and abounding in trees and long grass.

In concluding this attempt to convey to the mind of the reader some idea of the situation of this celebrated city, to the remark of Mr. Jolliffe,‡ that the stranger *now* sees from the neighbouring elevations "a wild, rugged, mountainous desert, no herds depasturing on the summit, no water flowing through the valleys, but one rude scene of savage melancholy waste, in the midst of which the ancient glory of Judea bows her head in widowed desolation," we may add the observation of Mr. Carne,§ that the very situation of the town "on the brink of rugged hills encircled by deep and wide valleys, bounded by eminences whose sides *were* covered with groves and gardens, added to its numerous towers and Temple, must have given it a singular and gloomy magnificence, scarcely possessed by any other city in the world."

* Jos. 'Antiq.,' b. xviii. c. 2.
† Burckhardt, 'Syria,' 319.
‡ Wars, b. iii. c. viii. § 10.
§ Dr. Robinson.
‖ Burckhardt, 'Syria,' p. 320.
¶ Jos. 'Antiq.,' b. xv. c. 9.
** Buckingham, Clarke, Pococke, and others.
†† D'Anville—'Dissertation sur l'Etendue de l'Ancienne Jérusalem, &c. Paris, 1747.'

* Robinson, 'Travels in Palestine and Syria,' vol. i. p. 105.
† 'Pict. Bible,' Heb. xiii. 12, Note.
‡ 'Letters from Palestine,' vol. i. p. 105.
§ 'Letters from the East,' p. 269.


ELEVATED ROCKY PLAIN,
CALLED
S C O P U S.
Wall built by Agrippa, A.D. 42.
OLIVET,
MOUNT OF
Of the New Testament.
2 Kings,
HILL OF OFFENCE,
the high places of idolatrous
by Solomon, 1 Kgs. xi. 7,
VALLEY OF HINNOM,
HILL
OF
EVIL COUNCIL.
Pool of Siloam,
Pool of Gihon, 2 Kgs. xx.
N
W
E
S
No. XI.
Patent Illuminated Maps.
ANCIENT
JERUSALEM,
AND THE
SURROUNDING DISTRICT.
Original Drawing by W. Hughes.
Scale of Jewish Furlongs.
English Feet.
1000


No. XII.
Patent Illuminated Maps.
THE COUNTRIES BETWEEN
JERUSALEM AND ROME,
IN THE
TIME OF THE APOSTLES;
ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE TRAVELS OF ST. PAUL.
THRACE
ADRIATIC SEA
OR THE
THE GREAT SEA
SYRTIS MAJOR
"THE QUICKSANDS"
EUXINE SEA
PROPONTIS
AEGEAN SEA
CRETAN
CARPATHUS
LIBYA
Catabathmus Magnus
Temple of Jupiter Ammon
Cyrene
Alexandria
LONGITUDE EAST
FROM GREENWICH


MODERN PALESTINE,

No. XII.

The Countries between Jerusalem and Rome in the Time of the Apostles, Illustrative of the Travels of St. Paul.

The numerous important places which are embraced within the present Map, and even such of them as are mentioned in the New Testament, will be best explained by the map itself, which furnishes such information as we are possessed of in reference to the localities of the places named in connexion with the labours of the Apostles, and we shall therefore here confine ourselves to a few explanatory remarks of a general nature, concluding with a brief notice of the cities which are interesting to the Scriptural student as the Seven Churches of Asia.

It is probably known to most of our readers that it has been a much-disputed question whether the island on which St. Paul and his companions were shipwrecked was that known in modern geography by the name of Malta, or an island in the Adriatic Sea now called Meleda: both of these islands have anciently borne the name of Melita. The principal arguments in favour of each of these hypotheses are stated by the editor of the Pictorial Bible, who concludes that "the weight of evidence of all kinds preponderates greatly in favour of Malta." * This conclusion is therefore adopted in our Map, the addition to which of an enlarged plan of that island enables us to direct attention to the inlet now called the Port of St. Paul, which the inhabitants have from time immemorial regarded as the "certain creek with a shore" which was discerned by the Apostle's companions at the dawn of day (Acts xxvii. 39). Among numerous alleged memorials of St. Paul's visit to the island which are pointed out by the inhabitants, they believe the cathedral church, which bears his name, and is seated on the top of the hill on which Citta Vecchia, the ancient capital, is built, to occupy the spot on which the residence of Publius, the governor, anciently stood.† "The quicksands," which were an object of terror to the sailors, are supposed to have been the broad shallow gulf, which the ancients called Syrtis Major; and which, from the shifting nature of the sands on its shores, and the general uncertainty of its bottom, was always a subject of terror to ancient navigators.

It is necessary to discriminate between the different senses in which the term "Asia" is used by the writers of the New Testament: in Acts vi. 9, xix. 26, and other places, it appears to indicate the whole of the peninsula which is known as Asia Minor, or the countries between the Black and Mediterranean Seas. A portion of this, including Phrygia, Bithynia, Mysia, Lydia, Caria, Lycia, Pisidia, and Pamphylia, and corresponding apparently with the Lower Asia of Herodotus, i. 177, was also distinctively called Asia. The Asia of Acts xvi. 6, and Rev. i. 11, comprehended, however, only Lydia and those parts of Mysia and Caria which were included in Æolia and Ionia; this contained the "seven churches" addressed by St. John. Few require to be told of the splendour to which the first of these, Ephesus, once attained, of its temple of Diana, accounted one of the wonders of the world, of its gorgeous palaces, its theatre and other erections, which made it one of the ornaments of Asia. A few ruined walls and fragments of broken columns, with some extensive subterranean vaults which demonstrate the solidity of its foundations, are all that now remains of its once celebrated temple. Among the relics of the city are the theatre, the scene of the tumult recorded in Acts xix. 29, which occupied the side of a mountain, the seats rising one above another, and the whole being open to the sky, the stadium, the gymnasium, the fragment of a Corinthian temple, and numerous other public buildings: its modern representative is a poor village called Aia-solúk, which contains only a few cottages. Smyrna, which from very ancient times was a city of importance, is the only city in this region which can be regarded as in any way retaining its former prosperity: it is now one of the most important commercial cities of the Turkish Empire, containing a population which is estimated at about 120,000. Its interior presents the usual characteristics of Turkish cities, narrow and ill-paved streets, and gloomy walls, which disappoint the expectations raised by a distant view: lately, however, its buildings have been much improved in this respect, the houses of painted wood being supplanted by erections of stone. Pergamos, which once contained a library consisting of 200,000 volumes, is still, under the name of Bergamo, a flourishing town, with about 14,000 inhabitants. Thyatira, although inhabited, is now a poor town, with scarcely any remains of its ancient importance. Many of its houses are built of mud; its streets are narrow and dirty, and its whole appearance indicates poverty and degradation; it bears the modern name of Ak-hissar. The miserable village of Sart preserves the name of Sardis, once the capital of the Lydian empire, and one of the most splendid and opulent cities of the east. Its ruins, which are scattered over a verdant plain, are described as greatly gone to decay, and as filling the mind of the beholder with a sensation of extreme desolation. Philadelphia, which exists as a town under the name of Allah-shehr (the city of God), contains few remains of antiquity, a circumstance partly attributable to the numerous earthquakes to which the region in which it is situated is liable. It contained in 1820 five churches, besides twenty others which were not then in use: the number of houses was estimated at 3000, of which 258 were Greek, the rest Turkish. None of the seven churches have sustained so complete an overthrow, or present now so entire a desolation, as Laodicea, which from an inconsiderable place rose about the Christian era to the rank of one of the largest towns in Phrygia. It has repeatedly suffered from earthquakes. Among its ruins, which are entirely without inhabitants, are the usual public buildings of ancient cities, and the whole surface within the line of the city wall is strewed with pedestals and fragments: its site is now called Eski-hissar. For a more complete account of these cities we may refer to the notes to the Pictorial Bible, as well as to the works of Pococke, Chandler, Fisk, Arundell, and other travellers.

* Acts xxvii. 39, Note.

† Ibid. xxxviii. 1 Note.

No. XIII.

Modern Palestine.

Syria remained a province of the eastern portion of the Roman Empire until its conquest between the years 633 and 638, A.D., by the followers of Mohammed, Jerusalem being delivered up to the second of his successors, the Khalif Omar, in person, in 637, and Aleppo being taken the following year. From this period Palestine was subject to the Saracens until the establishment by the Crusaders of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, of which city they became the masters in 1099; this kingdom was destroyed by Saladin (1187), and the Crusaders finally expelled in 1291, from which time Syria continued subject to the sovereigns of Egypt until the conquest of both countries by Selim I., in 1517, when they were absorbed into the Turkish empire. Although frequently possessed by the rebellious subjects of the Porte, Syria has ever since remained in *nominal* subjection to the Turkish authority, except during the few years in which it was held by Mohammed Ali, the Pasha of Egypt, who was, in 1841, constrained, through European interference, to restore it to the Porte.

It may be interesting to quote, from an Arabian historian of the fifteenth century, an account of one of the divisions of Syria known to the Moslems, as it appears to present some accordance both with the ancient and the more modern divisions of that country. "The first town in Syria is Báyas (the ancient *Baia*), and the last Al-Arísh. Syria is divided into five provinces or sections:—First, Palestine; . . . . . its first frontier town on the Egyptian road is Rafah, or Al-Arísh, next to this Gaza, then Ramula, or Ramlat Phalistín (*Rama*). Of great cities in Palestine are Elia (*Jerusalem*), Ascalon, the city of Abraham (*Hebron*), and Sebaste, and Neapolis (Shechem).—Secondly, Húran, whose remarkable places are the great Tiberias and its lakes.—Thirdly, Al-Ghút (the irrigated land), wherein are traces of many sacred events. Its chief city is Damascus.—Fourthly, Emesa; one of its chief dependencies is the city of Salamít (Salamiah?).—Fifth, Kinnarin (from Kinesrín, or old Aleppo?) whose chief city is Aleppo: its dependencies are Samwil and Antioch. Each of these provinces is again divided and subdivided into five prefectures and sub-prefectures." * More recently Syria has been politically divided into Pashâliks, the greater part of Palestine being comprehended within the Pashâlik of Damascus, as exhibited in the present Map: the country extending from Gaza to Jaffa sometimes constituted a separate division, under the name of the Pashâlik of Gaza.

We avail ourselves of this opportunity to add a few observations upon the Valley of the Jordan and its lakes to the brief notices of the physical geography of the country which have already been supplied, confining ourselves to those circumstances which apply equally to its ancient and present condition. The commencing portion of this valley is narrow, but widens as it approaches the Bahr el Húle into a fertile plain; the dimensions of this lake vary considerably with the season of the year, the northern part of it being dried up in summer, and the rest becoming a mere marsh,—its waters are muddy and unwholesome; the dimensions assigned to

* 'History of the Temple of Jerusalem.' Translated from the Arabic of Jalaladdín Al-Siúti, by the Rev. J. Reynolds, London, 1836, p. 394.

it in the Map are an average deduction from the many statements on this subject. From thence to the Lake of Tiberias the river flows in a narrow valley, which is continued round each side of that lake. A late traveller denies the existence of a small lake which is placed, on the authority of Dr. Richardson, between the Bahr el Húle and the Lake of Tiberias. The last-mentioned lake, variously called in the New Testament "the Lake of Gennesaret" (Luke v. 1), "the Sea of Tiberias" (John xxi. 1), and "the Sea of Galilee" (John vi. 1), has long been remarkable for the sweetness and softness of its water,* which is described by modern travellers as being as clear as crystal, and sweet, cool, and refreshing to the taste. Like all bodies of water surrounded by mountains, this lake is liable to whirlwinds, squalls, and sudden gusts, which are, however, of short duration; there is a current through its breadth, even to the shore, and the Jordan is distinguishable in its passage through it by the smoothness of the water in that part. That portion of the valley of the Jordan which extends from the Lake of Tiberias to the Dead Sea, is about five miles broad in its northern part, but widens as it advances southward, forming, on the west, the valley of Jericho. The great depression of this portion of it below the level of the country, to the westward, has already been noticed (p. 500), and that it is similarly circumstanced with reference to that on the east, is evident from the fact, that Jeraish, which is not more than thirty miles from the Jordan, is 2000 feet *above* the level of the Mediterranean.† The ascent of the elevations which bound the valley is therefore much steeper than the descent on the opposite side, so that they are rather cliffs than mountains; and from this great depression results the extreme heat by which it is characterised. The river itself flows in a lower valley, about three-quarters of a mile broad, which is about forty feet below the general level of the plain, to which its appearance presents a striking contrast; this lower part being covered with trees and luxuriant herbage, while the plain above it is in general a parched desert. The soil of the whole plain is sandy, and is not naturally fertile. The banks of the river are fourteen or fifteen feet high when at its lowest ebb: its width varies considerably with the season of the year, from thirty to one hundred yards; when swollen by the winter rains it is a deep and rapid stream. The term "Dead Sea," given to the lake into which the Jordan flows, is peculiarly applicable to it, from the extreme appearance of desolation presented by the country around, and the general absence of animal and vegetable life. Its waters are intensely salt, containing, according to the analysis made by Dr. Marcet, nearly one-fourth of their weight in salts; as they are much heavier than sea-water, they possess also greater buoyancy. Most of the exaggerated statements about this lake, such as the "apples of Sodom," beautiful to the sight, but containing only dust and ashes,—the doleful sounds and suffocating vapours issuing from it,—the sometimes visible remains of the cities submerged in it,—are now disproved; and although we have no evidence that its waters contain any living creatures, yet birds have frequently been seen to fly across them and skim their surface without sustaining any harm. Soundings which have lately been taken show the Dead Sea to have, in some places, a depth of more than 300 fathoms.* The water is perfectly clear and transparent, while that of the Jordan, which is nearly fresh, is muddy, and discolours the lake with its yellow current. It is not ascertained whether the asphaltum or bitumen which is found floating on the lake, as well as on its western shore, rises from the bottom of its bed, or originates in the rocks on its eastern border. The plain which extends to the south of the Dead Sea possesses a saline and sandy surface, and is terminated by a chain of cliffs of sandstone from sixty to seventy feet high: there is reason to believe it was formerly covered by the waters of the lake. It is not necessary to describe more minutely the characteristics of this remarkable basin, as a full account of it has been given in pp. 480—486 of this work.

* Josephus, 'Wars,' b. iii. c. 10.

† 'Journal of Royal Geog. Soc,' vol. vii. p. 456.

* 'Journal of Royal Geog. Soc.,' vol. vii. p. 456.